

NEOTESTAMENTICA ET PHILONICA

SUPPLEMENTS TO NOVUM TESTAMENTUM

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NEOTESTAMENTICA ET PHILONICA

Studies in Honor of Peder Borgen

EDITED BY

DAVID E. AUNE
TORREY SELAND
JARL HENNING ULRICHSEN



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PREFACE

Peder Johan Borgen was born in Lillestrøm, Norway, a few miles north of the capital city of Oslo, on January 26, 1928. In 1961, he married Inger Duesund, and their marriage was blessed with two daughters, Heidi and Ingunn. Since 1998, the Borgens have resided in Lillestrøm, where they returned following Peder's retirement from the University of Trondheim/Norwegian University of Science and Technology.

Peder Borgen was born and raised a Methodist. He served his church faithfully down through the years, and has been an important and willing resource for the various local congregations to which he and his family have belonged. From 1956 to 1958, he also served as pastor of the Methodist church in Harstad, in northern Norway. As a non-Lutheran theologian and Biblical scholar in Lutheran Norway, he found that it was not easy to find positions in theology in Norwegian universities. From 1962 to 1967, he was Assistant Professor and was then promoted to Associate Professor of New Testament at Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington D.C., one of several Methodist theological seminaries in the United States. In 1967, he was appointed Associate Professor of Religion in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Bergen. In 1973 he became Professor of New Testament at the University of Trondheim, Norway, where he remained until his retirement in 1995, though during his tenure at Trondheim he was offered professorships at several universities outside Norway.

Peder Borgen is also a gregarious person who enjoys the company of family and friends. His two daughters and their families live close to Lillestrøm, and the home of Peder and Inger is a natural center for family gatherings. Down through the years, many visitors have experienced the hospitality of Inger and Peder. Students and young scholars have experienced his real interest in their studies and their progression into the sciences of history and religion, and if he even managed—which he often did—to arouse an interest in them for Philo of Alexandria, his joy was unmistakable.

Most of the scholarly publications of Peder Borgen are focused on the New Testament and Hellenistic Judaism, but his interests also

range much wider. He is an authority on several facets of Norwegian history, including the history of Methodism in Norway. In 1997 he published a book length study, containing valuable source material and essays on the first National Meeting of the Saami People (often called Lapps), held in Trondheim in 1917. But to most colleagues he is probably best known as a scholar who has made important contributions to understanding the prolific writings of Philo of Alexandria. His first larger study however, the PhD dissertation from 1956 at Drew University, was on Luke-Acts: Eschatology and 'Heilsgeschichte' in Luke-Acts. His Norwegian dissertation from 1965, *Bread from Heaven*, focusing on John 6, made extensive use of the works of Philo, and has been widely praised (it was republished in 1981). This work, together with the bibliography included in this Festschrift (as well as that of his earliest Festschrift of 1988 on the occasion of his 60th birthday), indicate his continuing interest in issues involving the works of Philo, as well as how an understanding of Philo might illuminate aspects of the Gospel of John, the letters of Paul and the Apocalypse of John. In recent years he has been an editor and a contributor to numerous anthologies and Festschriften. Accordingly, it is appropriate that he be honored with this second Festschrift at his 75th birthday.

Though Norwegian by birth, Peder Borgen did not stay within his national borders, but has been one of several Scandinavian scholars who has exhibited broad international and ecumenically interests in his discipline. Having received his first doctorate from Drew University in the United States, he was fully aware of the need for scholars from smaller European countries to join and participate in international scholarly societies, and for building networks across national and denominational boundaries. He has been a frequent participant at the meetings of Society of Biblical Literature in both the United States and Europe, and especially at meetings of the *Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas*. He was the gracious host of the 40th Meeting of that society held at the University of Trondheim in 1985. In 1998–99 he served as president of this same Society, presiding at its meeting at the University of Copenhagen in 1998. At the present time he is the president of the editorial board of *Novum Testamentum* and *Novum Testamentum Supplements Series*, publications of E. J. Brill in Leiden, The Netherlands. In addition to several other duties of an ecclesiastical as well as scholarly nature, he has lectured widely in both Europe, North America and Israel,

and has presented papers at a variety of seminars and congresses.

His wide interests and many services through his church, his professorship, and through various societies have not passed unrecognized by the Norwegian government. At the end of his career as a teacher and professor, he was awarded a Senior Fellowship under the auspices of the Norwegian National Research Council. A member of various learned societies, from 1996–99, he served as president of the oldest such society of Norway, Det kongelige norske videnskabers selskab (The Royal Norwegian Society of Science and Letters) in Trondheim. In 1998, His Majesty King Harald V of Norway appointed him as Knight First Class of the Norwegian Royal Order of St. Olav. The regalia worn by Peder Borgen in the photograph serving as the frontispiece for this volume shows him wearing both the presidential chain of The Royal Norwegian Society of Sciences and Letters and the medal of a Knight First Class of the Norwegian Royal Order of St. Olav.

The editors are all connected in one way or another with Peder Borgen's influential tenure at the University of Trondheim. David Aune was a Fulbright Professor in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Trondheim during the 1982–83 academic year. Torrey Seland, who was in residence at the University from 1983, 1985–87, wrote a dissertation on Philo of Alexandria under Peder Borgen and received a Doctor Artium from that University in 1991. Jarl Henning Ulrichsen is a widely-known Norwegian New Testament scholar who was appointed the successor of Peder Borgen in 1995. The Editors, together with each of the contributors, are delighted to present this volume to Peder Borgen as a small token of gratitude for his friendship, scholarship and guidance. The title of the volume, *Neotestamentica et Philonica*, is reminiscent of *Festchriften* presented earlier to such scholars as Matthew Black (*Neotestamentica et semitica*) and Oscar Cullmann (*Neotestamentica et patristica*), hence it stands in a honorable line of succession, and will hopefully prove itself to be worthy of the honoree: Professor Peder Johan Borgen. *Amico et socio Peder Borgen: ad multos annos amice!*

March, 2002
David E. Aune
Torrey Seland
Jarl Henning Ulrichsen

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ABBREVIATIONS OF JOURNALS AND SERIES

AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> . Ed. D. N. Freedman. 6 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1992.
ABRL	Anchor Bible Reference Library
ALGHJ	Arbeiten zur Literatur und Geschichte des hellenistischen Judentums
ANRW	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Reich: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung</i> . Edited by H. Temporine and W. Haase. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1972–.
ASNU	Acta seminarii neotestamentici upsaliensis
ATANT	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments
AV	Authorized Version
BA	<i>Biblical Archaeologist</i>
BAGD	Bauer, W., W. F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich, and F. W. Danker. <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1979.
BAR	<i>Biblical Archaeology Review</i>
BASOR	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
BDB	Brown, F., S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs. <i>A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Oxford: Clarendon, 1907.
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologiarum lovaniensium
BevTh	Beiträge zur evangelischen Theologie
BjRL	<i>Bulletin of the John Rylands Library of Manchester</i>
BTB	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
CCAT	The Center for Computer Analysis of Texts
ConBNT	Coniectanea neotestamentica or Coniectanea biblica: New Testament Series
CRINT	Compendia rerum iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum
EvQ	<i>Evangelical Quarterly</i>
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literature des Alten und Neuen Testaments

<i>HibJ</i>	<i>Hibbert Journal</i>
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
<i>HR</i>	<i>History of Religions</i>
HThK	Herders theologischer Kommentar
HUTh	Hermeneutische Untersuchungen zur Theologie
ICC	International Critical Commentary
<i>IEJ</i>	<i>Israel Exploration Journal</i>
<i>ITQ</i>	<i>Irish Theological Quarterly</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JB	Jerusalem Bible
<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JSNTS	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
KEK	Kritisch-Exegetischer Kommentar
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LSJ	Liddel, H. G., R. Scott, H. S. Jones. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> . 9th ed. with revised supplement. Oxford: Clarendon, 1996.
LXX	Septuagint
MT	Massoretic Text
<i>MthZ</i>	<i>Münchener theologische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>NEAEHL</i>	<i>The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land</i> . Edited by E. Stern. 4 vols. Jerusalem: Simon and Schuster, 1993.
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NovTSup	<i>Novum Testamentum</i> Supplements
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NTD	Das Neue Testament Deutsch
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
<i>OEANE</i>	<i>The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East</i> . Edited by E. M. Meyers. New York: Oxford, 1997.
<i>PEQ</i>	<i>Palestine Exploration Quarterly</i>
QD	Quaestiones disputatae
<i>RGG</i>	<i>Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart</i> . Edited by K. Galling. 7 vols. 3rd ed. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1957–65.
<i>RHR</i>	<i>Revue de l'histoire des religions</i>
<i>RSR</i>	<i>Recherches de science religieuse</i>

RSV	Revised Standard Version
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SBLSP	Society of Biblical Literature Sources for Biblical Study
<i>SBLSP</i>	<i>Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers</i>
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SD	Studies and Documents
SEÅ	Svensk exegetisk Årsbok
SNTSMS	Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas Monograph Series
<i>SO</i>	<i>Symbolae Osloenses</i>
<i>SPhilo</i>	<i>The Studia Philonica Annual</i>
<i>STDJ</i>	<i>Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah</i>
Str-B.	Strack, H. L., and P. Billerbeck. <i>Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch</i> . 6 vols. Munich: Beck, 1922–61.
SUNT	Studien zur Umwelt des Neuen Testaments
<i>TDNT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> . Edited by G. Kittel and G. Friedrich. Trans. G. W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–76.
<i>TDOT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i> . Edited by G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren. Trans. J. T. Willis, G. W. Bromiley, and D. E. Green. 8 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974–.
ThHKNT	Theologische Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
<i>TWNT</i>	<i>Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament</i> . Edited by G. Kittel and G. Friedrich. Stuttgart, 1932–79.
UaLG	Untersuchungen zur antiken Literatur und Geschichte
UBS	United Bible Societies
<i>VC</i>	<i>Vigiliae Christianae</i>
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
<i>ZNW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentlichen Wissenschaft</i>
<i>ZTK</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche</i>

The Historical Jesus

JESUS AND THE KINGDOM: HOW WOULD HIS MESSAGE HAVE BEEN HEARD?*

James D. G. Dunn

1. *Introduction*

I take several observations as my starting point. (1) "The kingdom of God" was a central motif in Jesus' preaching. For present purposes this requires no documentation. (2) Equally clear in the Jesus tradition is a double emphasis in the motif: the kingdom as still to come; the kingdom as already present through Jesus' mission. Whether Jesus taught both emphases is a matter of greater controversy. But for the purposes of this paper I can leave that to one side. My question as to how the language would have been understood can be addressed as much to the tradition as to Jesus himself. (3) In all three of the principal languages behind the NT (Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek) the term had a breadth of meaning—"kingship" in its various aspects, particularly the exercise of kingship, hence "reign," and the territory ruled over, hence "kingdom."¹ (4) Although talk of God's "kingdom" is relatively scarce in the literature of Second Temple Judaism, the *content* of the phrase would have been familiar:² (a) the idea of God as "king (*melekh*)" over all the earth, over all the nations, over all the gods; (b) the conviction that only Israel had acknowledged God's kingship; and (c) the hope/expectation that God's reign from Mount Zion, at present acknowledged only by

* To Peder Borgen, whose friendship, scholarship and breadth of commitment I have long admired: *ad multos annos*.

¹ LSJ, *basileia*; BDB, *mamlakha*, *malkuth*; Dalman, *The Words of Jesus* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1902) 91–6; K. Seybold, "*melek*," *TDOT* 8 (1997) 359–60.

² M. Lattke, "On the Jewish Background of the Synoptic Concept, 'The Kingdom of God'," *The Kingdom of God*, ed. B. Chilton (London: SPCK, 1984) 72–91; D. Patrick, "The Kingdom of God in the Old Testament," *The Kingdom of God in 20th-Century Interpretation*, ed. W. Willis (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1987) 67–79 (here 72–5); J. J. Collins, "The Kingdom of God in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha," Willis (ed.), *Kingdom* 81–95; B. T. Viviano, "The Kingdom of God in the Qumran Literature," Willis (ed.), *Kingdom* 97–107; D. C. Duling, "Kingdom of God, Kingdom of Heaven," *ABD* 4:49–56; J. Meier, *Marginal Jew* 2:243–88; K. Seybold & H.-J. Fabry, "*melek*," *TDOT* 8 (1997) 365–75; G. Theissen & A. Merz, *Historical Jesus* (London: SCM, 1998) 246–52.

Israel, would soon be manifested over all the world and acknowledged by all (willingly or unwillingly).

I also assume that the talk of God's kingdom would naturally have triggered off a set of associations; that "kingship" was language embedded within a larger complex of convictions and images. The understanding of Yahweh as king over all is obviously an expression of Israel's monotheistic faith and creation theology. To say that God is "our/my King" is an affirmation of God's election of Israel to be his people chosen from out of all the peoples on the earth. Above all, the third aspect, that God's royal rule will be manifested to all, is a summary of a much more diffuse and diverse expectation. Since this diffuseness and diversity lies close to the heart of how Jesus' kingdom preaching would have been heard, I will note briefly the various clearly attested and most relevant themes. These, I assume, indicate the sort of expectations which were cherished and may have been evoked by Jesus' kingdom talk among Jews living in the land of Israel in the first century CE.³

(1) Based on Deut 30:1–10, there was a widespread belief that after a period of dispersion among the nations, the outcasts/scattered of Israel would be gathered again and brought back to the promised land, the unity of the twelve tribes re-established, and the relation of Israel as God's people and Yahweh as Israel's God restored.⁴ Wright summarises it as the hope of *return from exile*.⁵

(2) Bound up with this was the hope for a *renewed and abundant prosperity* (Deut 30:5, 9),⁶ the removal of disabilities and defects,⁷ and in effect a restoration of paradise⁸ as variations.

³ I will focus on pre-70 CE Palestinian literature for the most part.

⁴ Isa 49:5–6, 22–26; 56:8; 60:4, 9; 66:20; Jer 3:18; 31:10; Ezek 34:2–16; 36:24–28; 37:21–23; 39:27; Zeph 3:20; Zech 8:7–8; Tob 13:5; 14:5–6; Sir 36:11–15; Bar 4:37; 5:5; 2 Macc 1:27, 29; *1 En.* 90:33; *Jub.* 1:15–18; *Pss. Sol.* 11:1–9; 17:31, 44; *Shemoneh Esreh* 10. The theme of sin-exile-return is particularly prominent in *T. 12 Patr.* (*T. Levi* 14–16; *T. Jud.* 23; *T. Iss.* 6; *T. Zeb.* 9:5–9; *T. Dan* 5:4–9; *T. Naph.* 4; *T. Ash.* 7; *T. Ben.* 9:1–2); see H. W. Hollander & M. de Jonge, *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* (Leiden: Brill, 1985) 39–40, 53–6.

⁵ N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (London: SPCK, 1992) 268–71, 299–301; also *Jesus and the Victory of God* (London: SPCK, 1996), Index, "Return from exile." See also J. M. Scott, ed., *Exile: Old Testament, Jewish, and Christian Conceptions* (Leiden: Brill, 1997).

⁶ Isa 32:14–20; 35:1–2; 44:3; Ezek 34:25–29; 36:29–30, 33–36; Joel 2:18–26; 3:18; Amos 9:13–14; *Sib. Or.* 3.744–54; most exuberant in *2 Bar.* 29:5–8.

⁷ Isa 29:18; 35:5–6; 42:7, 18. Qumran saw the holiness of the community as dependent on the exclusion of those with such defects (1Q28a [1Qsa] 2.3–10; 11Q19 [11QT] 45.12–14).

⁸ Isa 11:6–8; 25:7–8; 51:3; Ezek 36:35; *Jub.* 4:26; 23:26–29; *1 En.* 25:4–6; 1QH

(3) Although this hope is often referred to as “the messianic age,” the involvement of *a particular (messianic) figure* or divine agent seems to be more like another variation.⁹ The imagery of a great feast is independent, though sometimes linked—hence (misleadingly) the description “messianic banquet.”¹⁰

(4) Some envisaged *a renewed covenant*, a turning from transgression, a fresh outpouring of the Spirit, and a level of law-keeping and holiness not known before.¹¹

(5) A further variation brought to the fore by Sanders and deserving of special mention is the hope for the *building of a new temple*.¹²

(6) Wright has drawn particular attention to another element within the various scenarios envisaged—the *return of Yahweh to Zion*.¹³

(7) Within a widespread conviction of Israel’s vindication and final triumph *the future of the other nations/Gentiles* was a matter of some speculation and disagreement.¹⁴ A few could envisage only their destruction.¹⁵ More commonly the expectation was for the Gentiles to come in pilgrimage to Zion to pay tribute¹⁶ or to worship God there (“eschatological proselytes”).¹⁷ This was often linked with the hope of the ingathering of the scattered tribes of Israel (1); but

16[=8].4–11). See further D. S. Russell, *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic* (London: SCM, 1964) 283–84.

⁹ See e.g. Theissen & Merz, *Historical Jesus* 531–7.

¹⁰ Isa 25:6; Ezek 39:17–20; 1Q28a (1Qsa) 2; 1 En. 62:14. See further D. Smith, “Messianic Banquet,” *ABD* 4.788–91.

¹¹ Isa 44:3–4; 59:20–21; Jer 31:31–34; Ezek 36:25–29; 39:28–29; Joel 2:28–3:1; Zech 14:16–21; CD 8.21; 19.33–34; 1QpHab 2.3–4; 1Q34 2.5–6.

¹² Tob. 14:5; Jub. 1.15–17, 29; 1 En. 90:28–29; 91:13; 11Q19 (11QTemple) 29.2–10; T. Ben. 9:2; Sib. Or. 3.294. See further E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (London: SCM, 1985) 77–87.

¹³ Isa 24:23; 25:9–10; 40:3–5, 9–10; 52:7–8; 59:20; Ezek 43:2–7; Zech 2:10–12; 8:3; 14:4; Mal 3:1; Jub. 1:26–28; 11Q19 (11QTemple) 29.3–9; *Shemoneh Esreh* 16. See further Wright, *Jesus* 616–23.

¹⁴ Cf. the survey in Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* 213–8.

¹⁵ Ps 2:8–9; Zeph 2:9–11; Sir 36:1–9; Bar 4:25, 31–35; Jub. 15:26; 1 En. 90:19; 1QM; Pss. Sol. 17:24; and understandably in the aftermath of Jerusalem’s destruction in 70 CE—4 Ezra 12:33; 13:38; 2 Bar. 40:1; Rev 19:17–21.

¹⁶ Isa 18:7; 45:14; 60:3–16; 61:5–6; Hag 2:7–9; 1QM 12.14; 4Q504 4.9–12; Pss. Sol. 17:30–31; Sib. Or. 3.772–6.

¹⁷ Pss. 22:27–28; 86:9; Isa 2:2–4 = Mic 4:1–3; Isa 45:20–23; 56:6–8; 66:19–20, 23; Jer 3:17; Zeph 3:9–10; Zech 2:11–12; 8:20–23; 14:16–19; Tob 13:11; 14:6–7; 1 En. 10:21; 90:30–36; Sib. Or. 3.715–9. See further Joachim Jeremias, *Jesus’ Promise to the Nations* (London: SCM, 1958) 56–62; T. L. Donaldson, “Proselytes or ‘Righteous Gentiles?’ The Status of Gentiles in Eschatological Pilgrimage Patterns of Thought,” *JSP* 7 (1990) 3–27.

factions within Second Temple Judaism also included other Jews among the practitioners of evil to be defeated and judged.¹⁸

(8) In some tension with the above sequence centred on the land of Israel (as in Isa 60:21) was the broadening out of the concept of inheriting the land (promised to Abraham and his descendants) to embrace the whole earth.¹⁹

(9) Quite common was a vivid expectation of a *climactic period of tribulation*, “a time of anguish, such as has never occurred since nations first came into existence” (Dan 12:1–2),²⁰ of the transition to a new age likened to the “birth-pangs” of a woman in labour.²¹ Presumably, this expectation can be tied into the motif of the suffering and vindication of the righteous present in Dan 7, but also elsewhere.²²

(10) Closely related are strands which seem to envisage *cosmic disturbances*,²³ even the destruction of creation,²⁴ and a new creation.²⁵

(11) Of a piece with much of the above expectation was the hope for a (final) destruction of evil and the *defeat of Satan*.²⁶

(12) Also the theme of *final judgment*,²⁷ which developed to include interesting sub-themes of heavenly books to be consulted on the day

¹⁸ See my “Pharisees, Sinners and Jesus,” *Jesus, Paul and the Law* (London: SPCK, 1990) 73–6.

¹⁹ Sir 44:21; *Jub.* 22:14; 32:19; *1 En.* 5:7; 4:13.

²⁰ Dan 12:1 is echoed in *T. Mos.* 8:1; CD 19:7–10.

²¹ Isa 13:8; 26:17–18; 66:7–9; Jer 6:24; 13:21; 22:23; Hos 13:13; Mic 4:9; 1QH 11(=3).7–12; *1 En.* 62:4; Mark 13:8; Rev. 12:2.

²² G. W. E. Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1972).

²³ Isa 13:9–10, 13; 24:23; Jer 4:23; Ezek 32:7–8; Joel 2:10, 30–31; 3:15; Amos 8:9; Zeph 1:15; Hag 2:6, 21; *1 En.* 80:4; 1QH 11(=3).35–36; *T. Mos.* 10:4–6; *Sib. Or.* 3.675–84.

²⁴ Ps 102:25–26; Isa 34:4; 51:6; Zeph 1:18; 3:8; *Jub.* 23:18; *1 En.* 10:2; 83; 91:16; 1QH 11[=3].29–36; *Sib. Or.* 2.196–213; 3.80–92.

²⁵ Isa 65:17; 66:22; *Jub.* 1:29; 4:26; *1 En.* 72:1; 91:16–17; 1QS 4.25; See further Russell, *Method* 280–2.

²⁶ Isa 24:21–22; *Jub.* 5:6; 10:7–11; 23:29; *1 En.* 10:4, 11–13; 13:1–2; 14:5; 18:16; 21:3–6; 69:28; 90:23; 91:16; *2 En.* 7:1–2; *T. Mos.* 10:1; *T. Levi* 18:12; *T. Zeb.* 9:8; *T. Dan* 5:10–11; Jude 6; Rev 20:2–3.

²⁷ Isa 66:15–16; Dan 7:10; Zeph 3:8; Mal 4:1; Wis 3:7, 18; 4:18–19; 5:17–23; *Jub.* 5:10–16; *1 En.* 1:7, 9; 10:13–14; 22:4, 11; 90:20–27; 91:7, 9, 14–15; 1QS 4.11–14; 5.12–13; 1QH 12(=4).20, 26–27; CD 7.9/19.6; 8.1–3/19.13–16; 1QpHab 12.14; 13.2–3; *Pss. Sol.* 14:9; 15:10, 12; *4 Ezra* 7:33–43. The most thorough recent study is that of M. Reiser, *Jesus and Judgment* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997) Part One (19–163); for the theme in *4 Ezra* see M. E. Stone, *Fourth Ezra* (Hermeneia. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990) 149–51.

of judgment,²⁸ and the expectation that God will give judgment of the Gentiles into the hands of Israel.²⁹

(13) The related belief in *resurrection* evidently emerged in explicit thought only in the latter half of the Second Temple period.³⁰

(14) Sheol/Hades, earlier understood as the abode of the dead, generally comes to be seen as a place of retribution for the wicked (*hell*),³¹ often equated with the fires of Gehenna (the valley of Hinnom).³²

I repeat: the above outline is not intended to be complete or to include all relevant texts. The concern is simply to fill out what we might call “the context of expectation” within which Jesus’ preaching about the kingdom of God would have been heard. But even such a cursory review raises several important hermeneutical issues.

2. *Three Key Questions*

A Grand Narrative?

In terms of the narrative criticism currently so popular, we could say that kingdom talk evoked a larger story. But should we be thinking of a *single* larger story? Can these different strands be combined into what historians have called a single “grand narrative?” The historians’ idea of a “grand narrative” is rooted in the biblical conception of history as a linear and purposeful progression. So perhaps the collapse of that idea among contemporary historians (in reference to the grand narrative of modernity)³³ should serve as a cue to biblical scholars to rethink the issue. The same warning has to be sounded if we assume that the different strands are parts of a coherent whole

²⁸ Exod 32:32–33; Ps 69:28; Dan 7:10; 12:1; Mal 3:16; *Jub.* 30:19–23; 36:10; 39:6; *1 En.* 89:61–64, 70–71; 98:7–8; 104:7; 108:7; CD 20:19; *Apoc. Zeph.* 7:1–8; *T. Ab. (A)* 12:7–18; 13:9–14.

²⁹ Dan 7:22 LXX; *Jub.* 32:19; Wis 3:8; 1QpHab. 5.4; cf. *1 En.* 95:3; 1QS 5.6–7; 1QH 12[=4].26; 1QM 6.6; 11.13–14; *T. Ab. (A)* 13:6. The thought is clearly echoed in 1 Cor 6:2.

³⁰ Isa 26:19; Dan 12:2–3; Hos 6:2; 2 Macc 7:10–11, 14, 23, 29; 1QH 19[=11].12–14; *Shemoneh Esreh* 2.

³¹ *Pss. Sol.* 14:6; 15:10; *1 En.* 22:10–13; 103:7–8; 2 *En.* 10; 40:12–42:2.

³² *1 En.* 27:1–2; 54:6; 90:25; 91:14; 100:9; 103:7; 4 *Ezra* 7:36–38; cf. already Isa 66:24; See further Joachim Jeremias, “*hades*” and “*geenna*,” *TDNT* 1 (1964) 146–8, 657–8.

³³ See e.g. K. Jenkins, “Introduction” to *The Postmodern History Reader* (London: Routledge, 1997) 5–9, 17–18.

which we can now reconstruct; or, to change to the image of a jig-saw, if we assume that there must be a complete picture which we can somehow hold in our minds apart from the jig-saw pieces (the picture on the jig-saw puzzle box), and which we can use to fit the pieces together to make up the whole. For the various attempts of twentieth century scholars to construct other larger myths from what they took to be its extant parts do not inspire confidence.³⁴ For what became apparent was that the resulting myths were the constructs of twentieth century scholarship rather than of the ancients themselves. Should then, alternatively, the various motifs be regarded simply as a sequence of disparate insights, hopes and aspirations which were put forward without any pretence to completeness?

Probably so. In sequencing the above themes I have attempted to put them in an appropriate order. But how the themes are to be related to one another is hardly clear. For example, Ezekiel 34 envisages both Yahweh restoring and pastoring his sheep, but also David as shepherd (34:11–16, 23–24); the Messiah figure does not seem to play any part in the return of Israel from exile. Does the return of Yahweh to Zion depend on the temple being rebuilt? How do we square the different expectations regarding the Gentiles in regard to restored Israel? Are tribulation and judgment the same thing? Was the hope of new creation simply a more radical expression of hope for restored prosperity? Texts like Isaiah and *Jubilees* correlate some of the motifs, but leave others uncorrelated. The animal apocalypse of *1 Enoch* (85–90) is the nearest attempt at comprehensiveness, but not all of the above strands are woven in. *4 Ezra* also helps clarify some of the sequence probably most often in view: “the day of judgment will be the end of this age and the beginning of the immortal age to come, in which corruption has passed away, sinful indulgence has come to an end, unbelief has been cut off, and righteousness has increased and truth has appeared” (7:113–114).

More important, we need to recall that many of the texts covered in the above review are sectarian in character. By no means can we assume that they each expressed a broad consensus view. The point is not simply that we need to allow, in effect, for different “Judaisms” and thus for different “stories” by which different Jews interpreted

³⁴ I refer to the “Mandean fever” of the early 20th century, and the quest for the pre-Christian Gnostic redeemer myth and “the divine man.”

their lives and expressed their hopes. It is more the fact that other Jews, other Jewish sects, often fell under the condemnations or were excluded from the hopes expressed in these documents. In other words, the factionalism of Second Temple Judaism reinforces the fragmentary, and indeed disputed character of many of these hopes in the detail with which they were spelled out.³⁵ None of this is to deny that those who spoke with hope for the future trusted implicitly that Yahweh is king and that he had a coherent purpose for Israel which he was in process of unfolding. It is simply to recognize the tensions between the strands and the various expressions of that hope, and to acknowledge not least the tensions between the different strands of Second Temple Judaism which expressed what may still have been a common hope rather differently.³⁶ One visionary's "coherent story" is not easily synthesized with another's.

The point should not occasion any surprise to those familiar with the Christian tradition. A study of early Christian expectation gives an equally fragmentary yield, a series of flashes of insight into what might be expected, which are equally difficult to synthesize.³⁷ And Christians of successive generations have been content to affirm a hope of heaven, even though the scope of that hope is hard to articulate beyond a sequence of glimpses afforded in Christian tradition—parousia (return) of Christ, resurrection and judgment, no marriage/sexual relations, heavenly banquet, participation in the worship of heaven, and so on—hardly a coherent story or grand narrative of life beyond death.

In so far, then, as Jesus' kingdom talk "plugs into" the Jewish expectation of the time, we have to bear in mind the same question

³⁵ On Jewish factionalism see e.g. J. D. G. Dunn, "Jesus and Factionalism in Early Judaism," in J. H. Charlesworth & L. L. Johns, eds., *Hillel and Jesus* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997) 156–75.

³⁶ T. F. Glasson with some justification criticized Schweitzer for claiming that there was a common "late Jewish view" of eschatology which Jesus' preaching of the kingdom could assume, whereas he could briefly distinguish eight different types of teaching ("Schweitzer's Influence—Blessing or Bane?," *JTS* 28 [1977] 289–302, reprinted in B. Chilton, ed., *The Kingdom of God* [London: SPCK, 1984] 107–20 [here 108–12]). Chilton takes the point, but also observes that "it would seem imprudent not to acknowledge that the range of apocalyptic literature, along with the Qumran scrolls, the earliest Targums and other intertestamental works, present a common expectation, variously expressed, that God was to act on behalf of his people in the foreseeable future" (Chilton's "Introduction" 22).

³⁷ I may refer to my *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) 314–5.

as to whether he and his hearers operated with a single, comprehensive story. Or should we be prepared for an equivalent series of glimpses of the beyond and flashes of insight, rather than a coherent, complete story?

What Do We Mean by "Eschatological?"

A second issue raised by the inventory of Second Temple Jewish expectation is the extent to which or sense in which we can speak of this expectation as "eschatological." This is the term which has bewitched and befuddled the quest of the historical Jesus for a century. "*Eschaton*" clearly denotes "end." But end of what? The assumption since Schweitzer has been that what was in view was "the end of time, the end of history, the end of the world." That would be fine, if the expectation was clearly and consistently for a heavenly, eternal existence. But much of the expectation reviewed in (1)–(14) was hope for a continued "this worldly" existence—the diaspora returned to the promised land, Israel triumphant over the nations, paradise restored, perhaps, but on earth. So "end" certainly in the sense of "end" of a period of time, end of an epoch. But "end of time, of history, of the world?" Yet at the same time there seem to be more radically "final" elements within the strands of expectation—new creation, final judgment, resurrection of the dead. What did "life-expectancy" beyond resurrection envisage?

The issue is not greatly clarified by the terminology used. The principal Hebrew terms of relevance are *qets*, *ʾacharith* and *ʾolam*.³⁸ The first normally denotes the "end" of a period of time, sometimes with a final sense.³⁹ In Daniel, however, it is given a clear eschatological connotation—"the time of the end [*ʾeth qets*]" (8:17; 11:35, 40; 12:4, 9), "the appointed time of the end [*moʿed qets*]" (8:19; 11:27), "the end of days [*qets hayyamin*]" (12:13).⁴⁰

The second likewise can also be used in the sense "end," when accordingly it is translated by the Greek *eschaton*. Most relevant is the phrase "end of days" (*ʾacharith hayyamin*).⁴¹ What is noteworthy

³⁸ See also J. Barr, *Biblical Words for Time* (2nd ed.; London: SCM, 1969) 122–32.

³⁹ Ezek 21:30, 34 (21:25, 29); 35:5 (but see K. Koch, "'*awon*,'" *TDOT* 10 [1999] 557); Hab 2:3.

⁴⁰ See also G. Delling, *telos*, *TDNT* 8 (1972) 53; LXX usually translates *qets* by *sunteleia* in these passages (65).

⁴¹ H. Seebass, *ʾachʾarith*, *TDOT* 1:210–2.

is the fact that the phrase could be used both of a limited future time,⁴² but also as envisaging the culmination of history.⁴³ In the Dead Sea Scrolls we find *qets 'acharith* ("the final age," "the last time," "time of the end" – García Martínez),⁴⁴ and elsewhere talk of the "end of the age."⁴⁵ But 1QpHab 7.7 also explicitly envisages that "the final age shall be prolonged";⁴⁶ and 11Q13 (11QMelch) 2.4–9 envisages "the last days" as extending over the tenth jubilee.

The third is much more common and often used in the sense "for ever" (*l'olam*, 'ad 'olam), or intensively "for ever and ever" (*l'olam wa'ed*).⁴⁷ The problem in this case is what we might call the aspirational or hyperbolic overtone with which the phrase is uttered, or the fact that it evidently had a degree of conditionality. A slave was enslaved "for ever," that is, for life.⁴⁸ The king was greeted formally, "May the king live for ever"⁴⁹—not a prayer for the king to be granted eternal life, but that he may reign for as long as possible. The promise of divine favour "for ever" could be qualified or withdrawn, as the psalmist recognized only too clearly (Ps 89.34–37, but also 38–45).⁵⁰

⁴² Most clearly Num 24:14; but also Gen 49:1; Deut 4:30; 31:29; Jer 48:47; 49:39. "Jer 23:20b = 30:24b stands on the borderline between future and eschaton" (Seebass, *TDOT* 1:211). NRSV translates the first four as "in days/time to come," but the Jeremiah references as "in the latter days."

⁴³ Isa 2:2 = Mic 4:1; Ezek 38:16; Dan 2:28; 10:14; Hos 3:5. NRSV translates Isaiah and Micah as "in days to come," Hosea and Ezekiel as "in the latter days," and Daniel as "at the end of days." This is clearly the sense in the regular use at Qumran (1QpHab 2.5–6; 9.6; 1Q28a [1QSa] 1.1; CD 4.4; 6.11; 4Q174 [4QFlor] 1.2, 12, 15, 19; 4Q178 3.3–4; 4Q182 [4QCat B] 1.1; 11Q13 [11QMelch] 2.4; 2 Bar. 25:1).

⁴⁴ 1QpHab 7.7, 12; 1QS 4.16–17; 5Q16. In 4 Ezra note 6:7–10, 25; 7:112–113; 11:39–46; 14:9 (see Stone, *Fourth Ezra* 103–4).

⁴⁵ "The day of the end" (1 En. 10:12; 16:1; 22:4); "the end of the ages (*sunteleia tōn aiōnōn*)" (T. Levi 10:2; T. Ben. 11:3); "the time of the end (*kairou sunteleias*)" (T. Zeb. 9:9); "the end of the age/world (*exitum saeculi*)" (T. Mos. 12:4; 4 Ezra 7:113 (on "the two ages" in 4 Ezra see Stone, *Fourth Ezra* 92–3); "the end of times" (2 Bar. 13:3; 19:5; 21:8; 27:15); cf. 1 En. 16:1).

⁴⁶ 2 Enoch seems to envisage the "end" of the whole of creation, visible and invisible, when "the times/time will perish, and there will be neither years nor months nor days nor hours . . . but there will be one age/eternity . . ." (65:7–8; cf. 33:2).

⁴⁷ H. D. Preuss, "*olam*," *TDOT* 10 (1999) 534–45; also E. Haag, "*ad*," *TDOT* 10 (1999) 456–62.

⁴⁸ Exod 21:6; Deut 15:17.

⁴⁹ 1 Kgs 1:31; Neh 2:3; Dan 2:4; 3:9; 5:10; 6:21.

⁵⁰ Eli (1 Sam 2:30–31); Saul (1 Sam 13:13); notably the promise that David's throne would be established "for ever" (2 Sam 7:13; Ps 89:29, 36–37; renewed in 11Q19 [11QTemple] 59.16–18), and that Yahweh (or his name) would dwell in Jerusalem "for ever" (1 Kgs 9:3; 1 Chr 23:25; 33:4, 7; but Lam 2:1–9; renewed in Ezek 43:7–9; 11Q19 [11QTemple] 47.3–4; 53.9–10).

Even in judgment oracles where the formula was obviously intended to indicate finality,⁵¹ there could be hope of reversal;⁵² though the concomitant promise of salvation for Israel “for ever” presumably indicated a time span stretching as far beyond the time horizon as it is possible to conceive.⁵³ Dan 12:2–3 conceives of post-resurrection existence as either “everlasting life (*hayye ‘olam*)” or “everlasting contempt (*dir’on ‘olam*).”

Are we then in danger of attributing a clarity of conviction to language and conceptions which were much less clearly conceptualized? Would it be more accurate (and fairer) to the hopes reviewed to speak in terms of periods of time without a predetermined closure, in contrast to fixed spans of time, such as a sabbath, a festival, a week, a year, a generation, a reign? The fact that the stereotyped phrase *dor wador*, “generation upon generation,” could be used as equivalent to “for ever”⁵⁴ should give us pause. But there is still a further potential confusion in language to be considered.

Throughout the twentieth century the issue has been obscured by a persistent confusion between the terms “*eschatology*” and “*apocalyptic*.” Two attempts were made in the 1980s to clarify the latter, though with so far uncertain success. One takes seriously the unsatisfactory use of “apocalyptic” as a noun,⁵⁵ and offers a threefold distinction: “apocalypse” as a literary genre; “apocalypticism” as a social ideology; and “apocalyptic eschatology” as a set of ideas present in other genres and social settings.⁵⁶ The other has protested against treating the two terms as though they were synonyms:⁵⁷ “apocalypse”

⁵¹ Isa 34:10; Jer 17:4; 20:11; Ezek 27:36; 28:19; 35:9; Zeph 2:9; Mal 1:4.

⁵² The “desolation for ever” foreseen by Jeremiah (18:16; 25:9, 12; 49:33) is evidently countermanded by the promises of Isa 58:12 and 61:4.

⁵³ Isa 9:7; 32:17; 34:17; 60:15, 19–21; Jer 17:25; 31:40; Ezek 37:26–28; Hos 2:19; Joel 2:26–27; Mic 4:7. In regard to kingdom texts, note especially Dan 2:44; 3:33; 4:34; 6:26. Qumran saw itself as an “everlasting community,” an “everlasting planting,” an “everlasting people” (1QS 2.25; 3.12; 8.5; 11.8; 1QH 11[=3].21; 14[=6].15; 16[=8].6; 1QM 13.9). 11Q19 (11QT^a) repeatedly speaks of the ordinances relating to the temple as “everlasting” (18.8; 19.9; 21.04; 25.8; 27.4; 35.9).

⁵⁴ Exod 3:15; Deut 23:2–3; Pss 33:11; 61:6; 72:5; 79:13; 89:4; 100:5; 102:12; 106:31; 119:90; 135:13; 145:13; 146:10; Isa 34:17; 51:8; Joel 3:20.

⁵⁵ See e.g., the objections of T. F. Glasson, “What is Apocalyptic?,” *NTS* 27 (1980–81) 98–105.

⁵⁶ See particularly J. J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature* (2nd ed.; New York: Crossroad, 1984; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) 1–42.

⁵⁷ C. Rowland, *The Open Heaven: A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity* (London: SPCK, 1982); also *Christian Origins* (London: SPCK, 1985) 56–64.

(revelation) denotes the unveiling of heavenly mysteries; most of these “revelations” concern “final events,” but by no means all.⁵⁸ If we are to observe such distinctions, then the items of Second Temple expectation can be called “apocalyptic” insofar as they have been “revealed” to the writers. The more popular use (also beyond theological circles), of “apocalyptic” for a future scenario of supernatural interventions in human history involving unprecedented violence and horror, should be resolutely avoided. “Eschatological” is much the more appropriate term, even if it leaves us with the unclarity just discussed. Such question cannot be ignored when we try to make sense of the Jesus tradition.

Literal, Symbol, Metaphor or What?

The degree of fragmentation in the stories told and the lack of clarity in key terms (not least “eschatology” itself) reinforces the question raised by Norman Perrin.⁵⁹ Is “the kingdom of God” a concept or a symbol? Should kingdom talk and the content of eschatological expectation be unpacked in literal or symbolical terms? The issue is nicely posed by Wright’s treatment. He sees apocalyptic language as “an elaborate metaphor-system for investing historical events with theological significance.” Warnings of imminent judgment “were intended to be taken as denoting . . . socio-political events, seen as the climactic moment in Israel’s history.”⁶⁰ To reduce the reality envisaged to the terms of the metaphor itself would be to mistake its character as metaphor. This is the mistake of those who interpret such apocalyptic language as predicting the actual end of the time-space complex. Whereas its proper function is to invest current events with “theological significance.” However, Wright’s treatment is less clear as to whether all the items listed above (under 1. Introduction) are metaphorical in the same way (or to the same extent). He has the elements of apocalyptic eschatology primarily in view. But is the grand narrative of Israel’s return from exile and Yahweh’s return to Zion equally metaphorical (“the grand metaphor,” perhaps)?

⁵⁸ We need only mention, for example Paul’s use of the term “apocalypse” in Gal 1:12 and 2:2, and “The Astronomical Book” or “Book of Heavenly Luminaries” which makes up *1 En.* 72–82.

⁵⁹ N. Perrin, *Jesus and the Language of the Kingdom: Symbol and Metaphor in New Testament Interpretation* (Philadelphia: Fortress; London: SCM, 1976) 5–6, 22–3, 29–32.

⁶⁰ Wright, *Jesus* 96–7.

Or in this case are we to expect a closer correlation between the terms of the metaphor and the reality in view?⁶¹

One way of tackling such an imponderable issue is to ask how Jews of Jesus' time would have understood the hopes indicated above (under 1. Introduction). Would they have looked for literal fulfilment, or at least for a close correlation between hope and reality, or understood the hopes as "metaphorical?" The beloved traditions of the exodus would certainly have encouraged many to look for visible divine intervention. We know, for example, that two of the would-be prophets of deliverance around Jesus' time acted on that assumption, in seeking for a repetition of the miracles of crossing the Jordan dry shod and the fall of Jericho's walls (Josh 3–4, 6).⁶² And the memory of Samaria's deliverance from the Syrians (2 Kgs 7) and Jerusalem's deliverance from Sennacherib's army (2 Kgs 19) would hardly discourage such a realistic hope, as must have inspired many Zealots in the final days of the 66–73 CE revolt against Rome. So, should a Christian expositor be comforted by the fact that the Baptist's expectation of judgment can find such a high degree of literal fulfilment in the catastrophe which engulfed Israel forty years after Jesus' mission?

On the other hand, the disappointingly ill-fulfilled hope of return from exile (as in Isa 43:1–44:8; 54–55) would surely have raised questions in the minds of others. And would there not be those who shared Philo's recognition that the Jews were so populous that no one country could hold them (*Flacc.* 46), so that hope for a wholesale return of the diaspora to the land of Israel would have been seen as unrealistic? Alternatively, one might have expected that in order to count as fulfilled, return from exile would have involved some measure of diaspora Jews returning to Palestine; and return of Yahweh to the Temple (assuming his absence) would presumably be signalled by at least a vision of divine glory settling again on the temple. So we need to ask also whether the hope of (final) forgiveness of sins (rendering future sin offerings unnecessary?) and the hope of outpoured Spirit (rendering fresh teaching of the law unneces-

⁶¹ See also the questions raised by D. C. Allison, *Jesus of Nazareth: Millenarian Prophet* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998) 153–64; also in his critique of Wright, "Jesus and the Victory of Apocalyptic," in C. C. Newman, ed., *Jesus and the Restoration of Israel: A Critical Assessment of N. T. Wright's Jesus and the Victory of God* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1999) 126–41, with response from Wright (261–68).

⁶² Josephus, *Ant.* 20.97–98, 167–70.

sary?) was as idyllic (symbolical) as the hope for abundant prosperity or paradise restored, and whether there was a realistic hope for the complete eradication of evil and transgression.

Here we need to be particularly careful with the term “metaphor” itself. In literary criticism “metaphor” is a type of trope, “trope” being a figure where the meaning of an individual word or phrase is altered or “turned” from its conventional sense.⁶³ Thus metaphor is different from “simile,” for in a simile the words continue to bear their conventional sense. Whereas “metaphor is using a word to stand for something different from the literal referent, but connected to it through some similarity.”⁶⁴ Metaphor, Ricoeur has observed, is a semantic innovation which produces its meaning-effect by the impertinence of its attribution.⁶⁵ In his *Rule of Metaphor*,⁶⁶ he tells us, he “risked speaking not just of a metaphorical sense but also of a metaphorical reference in talking about this power of the metaphorical utterance to redescribe a reality inaccessible to direct description.”⁶⁷ Similarly in her definitive study of metaphor, Janet Martin Soskice points out, *inter alia*, that physical objects are not metaphors, nor are metaphors merely decorative ways of saying something that could be said literally. Rather, metaphors are ways of saying that which cannot be said literally, or which a literal description would be inadequate to describe. In religious language metaphors can be described as “reality depicting without pretending to be directly descriptive.”⁶⁸

⁶³ *Trope* (“turn, turning”). The usage is classical; Quintillian defined “trope” as the artistic alteration of a word or phrase from its proper meaning to another (*Institutes* 8.6.1).

⁶⁴ S. Wright, *The Voice of Jesus: Studies in the Interpretation of Six Gospel Parables* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2000) 8.

⁶⁵ “With metaphor, the innovation lies in the producing of a new semantic pertinence by means of an impertinent attribution. “Nature is a temple where living pillars. . . .” The metaphor is alive as long as we can perceive, through the new semantic pertinence . . . the resistance of the words in their ordinary use and therefore their incompatibility at the level of a literal interpretation of the sentence” (*Time and Narrative*, Vol. 1 [Chicago: University of Chicago, 1984] ix).

⁶⁶ *The Rule of Metaphor* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1977).

⁶⁷ *Time and Narrative* 1.xi.

⁶⁸ Janet Martin Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985) here 145. Wright is familiar with this discussion (*New Testament and People of God* 63): “metaphors are themselves mini-stories, suggesting ways of looking at a reality which cannot be reduced to terms of the metaphor itself” (129–30). Cf. the looser discussion of metaphor in G. B. Caird, *The Language and Imagery of the Bible* (London: Duckworth, 1980) 152–9.

If there is something of historical, as well as contemporary hermeneutical value here, we should be open to the possibility that Jesus' kingdom talk had a metaphorical character. That is, in speaking of the kingdom of God as he did he may have been "turning" it from its conventional sense; God's kingship is not to be understood in the terms which "kingship" normally evoked. Or again, it may have been "reality depicting without pretending to be directly descriptive," depicting that which could not be depicted otherwise. This is not quite the same as Perrin's understanding of the kingdom as a "tensive symbol," one whose set of meanings can be neither exhausted nor adequately expressed by any one referent. But the point is similar, for the historian asking how the term would have been understood by Jesus' hearers, as much as for the modern interpreter. If there is something in this, then we should beware of evaluating Jesus' kingdom talk by the extent to which it can be translated into something more literal. And fulfilment of eschatological hope is presumably not to be measured by the degree of correlation between language and event, even when a closer correspondence is in the event claimed. The suggestion here is that the language of vision (apocalypse) is not to be pressed for a literal cash value, that the correlation between such language and actual (literal) events is of less consequence than has usually been assumed, and that hope expressed in such language might well find satisfaction (fulfilment) in events quite different from those depicted.

Here again the vicissitudes of Christian hope may provide a helpful parallel. Christian hope is typically composed of images, principally drawn from Revelation, which include heavenly banquets (the marriage feast of the lamb) and endless worship, eternal life and no more suffering. Such cannot be taken literally; as metaphors they are an attempt to indicate we know not what, that is, apart from such metaphors. But for centuries Christians have been content to hope for heaven, without any real idea of what "heaven" is and what "actually" happens "there," though some have indeed wanted to press the metaphors for some literal content. The question is whether it was any different for Second Temple Jewish expectation and hope.

So we ask again, what did Jesus' preaching of the kingdom evoke in his hearers' minds? Can we tell from what has been remembered and the way in which it has been remembered what Jesus intended to evoke by his use of the phrase "the kingdom of God?"

3. *Any Answers?*

Here a detailed discussion should follow, of the Jesus tradition as a whole, including the issue whether Q provides evidence that Jesus' preaching was "non-apocalyptic" in character. But let us assume, for the sake of argument, that we have completed that exercise and concluded that we cannot simply excise either the present or the future emphasis from Jesus' kingdom preaching. For it is precisely the presence of both emphases in the Jesus tradition which poses something of a riddle to the modern interpreter. To us, if not to the first tradents, a claim that the kingdom is both yet to come and already active in the present does seem to pose difficulties of conceptualisation. How could Jesus have held and taught both emphases? What understanding of "the kingdom of God" is involved? Are answers to the three key questions posed above forthcoming?

A Grand Narrative?

A feature of recent Jesus research has been the strongly affirmative answer offered in effect to this question by some. The answer has been to read the Jesus tradition as a whole within an overarching hypothesis, a meta-narrative. Indeed, some would say that without such a grid into which to fit the data, the evidence is capable of too many divergent readings.

Halvor Moxnes reminds us that Protestants were for a long time attracted by the master narrative of a decline from the age of spirit and freedom to the age of institutions and control ("early Catholicism" as a negative description).⁶⁹ And the grand narrative of modernity actually provided the key for the old Liberal questers: a non-miracle working, moral teacher affirmed a European optimistic individualism born of self-conscious cultural supremacy, industrial might and imperialistic conquest. A century ago the paradigm shift occasioned by Weiss and Schweitzer made Jewish apocalyptic eschatology the story within which Jesus' kingdom proclamation was to be read. And though the apocalyptic paradigm was challenged at various points, for most of the twentieth century it retained its paradigmatic sway

⁶⁹ H. Moxnes, "The Historical Jesus: From Master Narrative to Cultural Context," *BTB* 28 (1998) 135–49 (here 138).

over Jesus questers, as it continues to do over a significant number.⁷⁰ But now that paradigm in turn has been undermined for many, and other hermeneutical keys are being sought.⁷¹ Those Jesus questers unwilling to align themselves with postmodernism's pluralism and concomitant rejection of all grand narratives still look for the grand narrative which will provide the key to resolve the riddle of Jesus' kingdom preaching. Two such have been worked out most fully during the final decade of the twentieth century—by Dominic Crossan and Tom Wright.

a) *Dominic Crossan*. In his *Birth of Christianity*, in which he provides, as it were, the footnotes lacking in his *Historical Jesus*,⁷² Crossan makes clear that he operates with a grand narrative drawn from cross-cultural anthropology ("the Lenski-Kautsky model")—the grand narrative of "peasant society," or egalitarian peasant society,⁷³ exploited by and resistant to the ruling classes.⁷⁴ On this broad template (not just peasant Judaism, but peasant society as such), Crossan stretches some of the particularities of Galilean archaeology,⁷⁵ and finds confirmation of escalating peasant protest and turmoil at the time of Jesus in Horsley's thesis to that effect.⁷⁶ Together with his literary analysis by chronological stratification,⁷⁷ the result is one of the most impressive methodological *tours-de-force* since Strauss a century and a half earlier. When Jesus' kingdom preaching is located within this framework Crossan argues that, while the kingdom could have been understood in apocalyptic terms at the time of Jesus, it was the sapiential kingdom which provides the best fit: "The sapiential Kingdom looks to the present rather than the future . . . One enters

⁷⁰ Notably Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* 10; Allison, *Jesus of Nazareth* 36–44; G. Lüdemann, *Jesus after 2000 Years* (London: SCM, 2000), *passim*.

⁷¹ See also Moxnes' critique of other "master narratives" on offer ("Historical Jesus" 138–48).

⁷² J. D. Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (San Francisco: Harper, 1991); *idem*, *The Birth of Christianity* (San Francisco: Harper-San Francisco, 1998).

⁷³ *Historical Jesus* 263–4.

⁷⁴ *Birth* 151–9, 166–73; "Peasant is an interactive term for farmers who are exploited and oppressed" (216).

⁷⁵ *Birth* ch. 13.

⁷⁶ *Birth* 148, 210, referring to R. A. Horsley & J. S. Hanson, *Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs: Popular Movements in the Time of Jesus* (Minneapolis: Seabury, 1985); see also Crossan, *Historical Jesus* chs. 7, 9 (particularly 184–5), and 10 (particularly 218–9).

⁷⁷ *Historical Jesus* 427–50.

that Kingdom by wisdom or goodness, by virtue, justice, or freedom. It is a style of life for now rather than a hope of life for the future.”⁷⁸

There are several problems with this grand narrative. For one thing, although Crossan protests that he does not wish simply to extrapolate from the Mediterranean world as though it was a single cultural unit, or to generalise too straightforwardly from the universals of peasant society, his treatment of Judaism is very limited and his analysis of the conditions in lower Galilee very restricted. But we really do need to have a clearer idea of what Judaism meant at the time of Jesus, of its distinctives, and how it shaped Jewish identity, in Galilee as well. There were national and religious factors operative in Jewish society and not simply social and economic factors, and arguably the former provided the dominant narrative by which even Jewish peasants made sense of their lives. That narrative cannot simply be fitted into a larger economic narrative, a la Marx; the distinctives of Jewish tradition and identity actually form a counter narrative, which for Jesus at least seems to have been determinative, for his message of the kingdom not least.

For another, the half dozen episodes of protest narrated by Josephus for the period are too easily linked into a single trajectory of escalating unrest and violence. But with the exception of the turmoil after the death of Herod the Great and the build up to the first revolt in 66, all we have is a few isolated and idiosyncratic incidents, whose impact in Galilee during the 20s and early 30s was probably minimal. For the rest, and during the ministry of Jesus, there is little indication of escalating unrest—injustice, oppression and complaint no doubt, but the impression of a moving escalator of heightening protest again owes more to a larger generalisation read into the particularities of Jesus’ historical situation with too little care for the particularities themselves.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ *Historical Jesus* 284–92 (here 292).

⁷⁹ See S. Freyne, *Galilee from Alexander the Great to Hadrian 323 BCE to 135 CE* (Wilmington, Delaware: Michael Glazier, 1980) ch. 6; R. A. Horsley, *Jesus and the Spiral of Violence: Popular Jewish Resistance in Roman Palestine* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987) ch. 4; J. L. Reed, *Archaeology and the Galilean Jesus* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2000) 84. See also U. Rappaport, “How Anti-Roman Was the Galilee?,” in L. I. Levine, ed., *The Galilee in Late Antiquity* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1992) 95–102. Cf. Tacitus’ report that “under Tiberius (14–37 CE) all was quiet” (*Histories* 5.9). The incidents under Pilate were confined to Jerusalem (Josephus, *War* 2.169–77; *Ant.* 18.55–62); the episode mentioned

Finally, it is rather surprising that Crossan draws his illustration and documentation for the sapiential kingdom entirely from diaspora Jewish (Philo, Wisdom of Solomon) and Greek literature (*Sentences of Sextus*).⁸⁰ Quite how that demonstrates an option open to Jesus is not clear, especially as the absence of king/kingdom language in Jewish wisdom is so noticeable. In contrast the theme is prominent in psalms, prophets and apocalypses. All of which suggests that Crossan is again extrapolating too quickly from a much wider hypothesis and pushing unjustifiably hard for a non-apocalyptic sense for “kingdom” as the context of meaning which would inform the hearing of Jesus’ Galilean audiences.

b) *N. T. Wright* is the most forthright in his assertion of the need for the quester to work with a grand narrative.⁸¹ He criticizes his predecessors for “pseudo-atomistic work on apparently isolated fragments” and argues instead that “the real task” is that of “major hypothesis and serious verification.”⁸² “The scholar must work with a large hypothesis, and must appeal, ultimately, to the large picture of how everything fits together as the justification for smaller-scale decisions.”⁸³ In other words, verification essentially consists in demonstrating how well individual details fit within the framework of the larger story. The point here is that the phrase “kingdom of God” evokes a story, which may well be present even when the phrase is absent; and individual sayings can only be made sense of in relation to that story.⁸⁴ *Jesus and the Victory of God* is a massive exposi-

in Luke 13:1–2 involving Galileans is impossible to evaluate satisfactorily as to either source or significance; and Antipas’ only military campaign, his unsuccessful war against the Nabateans under Aretas, took place in 36 CE. See also D. M. Rhoads, *Israel in Revolution 6–74 CE* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976), conclusions 174–5; Sanders, *Judaism* 35–43.

⁸⁰ *Historical Jesus* 287–91. *Sentences of Sextus*—“a collection of Greek wisdom sayings assembled by a Christian redactor probably near the end of the 2d century CE” (F. Wisse, *ABD* 5.1146–7).

⁸¹ Wright, *New Testament and People of God*: “critical realism” as he understands it “sees knowledge of particulars as taking place within the larger framework of the story or worldview which forms the basis of the observer’s way of being in relation to the world” (37); “simplicity of outline, elegance in handling the details within it, the inclusion of all the parts of the story, and the ability of the story to make sense beyond its immediate subject-matter: these are what counts” (42); see further 98–109.

⁸² Wright, *Jesus* 33; see also 51, 87–9, 133.

⁸³ Wright, *Jesus* 79.

⁸⁴ Wright, *Jesus* 224–5.

tion of Jesus on that basis, quite as impressive and enchanting as Crossan's, as one might have hoped for from two who take so seriously the medium of story in their work.

The problems with Wright's exposition begin with his identification of the grand narrative. He has no doubt that "the controlling story" is that of "exile and restoration,"⁸⁵ that is, the conviction of most of Jesus' contemporaries that Israel was still in exile,⁸⁶ and the preaching of Jesus to the effect that the exile was now over. The proclamation that "the kingdom of God is at hand" summed up "the entire narrative of Israel's new exodus, her final return from exile."⁸⁷ There are three problems with this.

First, he exaggerates the importance of the theme of return from exile in Palestinian Judaism. It was certainly a feature of Jewish eschatological hope, that is, for the return of the scattered outcasts of Israel to the homeland, in accordance with the original schema of Deut. 30.⁸⁸ But there is no real evidence that *those who actually were living within the land* thought of themselves as still in exile. Such a hypothesis hardly squares with the amazing hymn of praise to Simon the High Priest in Sir 50,⁸⁹ nor was it to be expected among the Sadducean priests responsible for the twice daily *Tamid* offering in the Temple.⁹⁰ It hardly fits with the confidence of blamelessness

⁸⁵ Wright, *Jesus* 245, 576–7. Sanders speaks more cautiously of "a common hope for the restoration of Israel which could embrace a variety of themes" (*Jesus and Judaism* 124).

⁸⁶ Particularly Wright, *New Testament and People of God* 268–72; *idem*, *Jesus* xvii–xviii, 126–7, 203–4.

⁸⁷ Wright, *Jesus* 244.

⁸⁸ See above under 1. Introduction (1). Writings like Daniel, Tobit and Baruch, of course, write from the perspective of those still scattered among the nations (Dan 9:3–19; Tob 13:3–18; Bar 2:11–15; 3:7–14). Such imaginative living again (as in liturgy) through epochal events of Israel's history—covenants with the patriarchs, passover and exodus, wilderness wanderings and entry into the promised land (cf. Heb. 3–4), Davidic kingdom and resilient faith under oppression (n.89 below), exile and return, Maccabean triumph, loss of Temple (70 CE)—should not be treated woodenly or reduced to a single motif.

⁸⁹ The prayer in Sir 36:13, 16 ("Gather all the tribes of Jacob, that they may inherit the land as in days of old") "is for God to bring back to the Holy Land all the Jews who never returned after the Exile" (P. W. Skehan & A. A. Di Lella, *Ben Sira* [AB 39; New York: Doubleday, 1987] 422). The appeal for deliverance from oppression (36:1–22) is of a piece with the lamentation Psalms (Pss 43, 54–57, 109, 140–141, 143) and does not presuppose that the speaker believed himself, or those who had already returned to the promised land, to be still in exile.

⁹⁰ M. Casey, "Where Wright is Wrong," *JNT* 69 (1998) 77–103 (here 99). R. P. Carroll links the absence of "any sense of the permanence of the diaspora

of a Pharisee like Saul (Phil 3:6), and “the righteous” represented in the *Psalms of Solomon* assuredly did not think of themselves as still in exile; the righteous/sinner antithesis evidently worked with a frame of reference which was not dependent on the exile-restoration paradigm. The Qumran community certainly made use of the exile-restoration motif, but in different ways: a return from “Damascus” already accomplished (CD 1.4–8),⁹¹ an exile from Jerusalem in the wilderness (of Judea!),⁹² and the threat of future exile to the wicked (repeating the pattern of Deut 29:27–28).⁹³ The complexity of the use of the exile imagery is not adequately caught by concluding simply that the sect still considered itself in exile.⁹⁴ The same point about the complexity of the motif of restoration can be made with regard to *Jubilees*⁹⁵ and the “sign prophets” in Josephus (*Ant.* 20.97–8, 167–72).⁹⁶ And generally it goes beyond the evidence to deduce that

experience” in the prophetic literature as reflecting “the point of view of the Jerusalem community” (“Deportation and Diasporic Discourses in the Prophetic Literature,” in Scott, ed., *Exile* 63–85 [here 83]). “The elite community regarded Jeremiah’s prophecy as so entirely fulfilled, so thoroughly vindicated as to be no longer relevant . . .” (B. Halpern, “The New Names of Isaiah 62:4. Jeremiah’s Reception in the Restoration and Politics of ‘Third Isaiah’,” *JBL* 117 [1998] 623–43 [here 630]).

⁹¹ “CD does not mention the sixth century BCE return directly, because the writer considered the exile to have ceased only with the foundation of his own community” (J. G. Campbell, “Essene-Qumran Origins in the Exile: A Scriptural Basis,” *JJS* 46 [1995] 143–56 [here 148]).

⁹² M. G. Abegg, “Exile and the Dead Sea Scrolls” in Scott, ed. *Exile* 111–27 (here 120–4), cites 1QpHab 11.4–8 (the “exile” [*galoth*] of the Teacher of Righteousness); 1QH 12.8–9 (“they drive me from my land”); 1QM 1.2–3 (“the exiles [*golah*] of the desert”); 4Q171 2.26–3.1 (“the returnees/repentant from the desert”); 4Q177 8–10 (“exile?”); 4Q390 1 5–6 (the first to go up “from the land of their captivity” [*m’rtz shbim*, an echo of Jer 30:10; 46:27] in order to build the sanctuary, who will not join in the evil as of the pre-exilic period); cf. references to the community in the desert (1QS 8.13–14; 9.19–20). 4Q161 2.14, “when they returned from the wilderness of the pe[ople]s” evidently echoes Ezek 20:35, with its conception of the wilderness as a purgative intermediate stage between exodus from the lands of the diaspora and entry into the land itself (20:33–38).

⁹³ 4Q169 3–4 4.1–4; Abegg fills out 4QMMT C21b–22 in the same terms (“Exile” 122–3).

⁹⁴ As Abegg does (“Exile” 120 n. 38, 121).

⁹⁵ B. Halpern-Amaru, “Exile and Return in *Jubilees*,” in Scott, ed., *Exile* 127–44, concludes: “from the postexilic perspective of the author, restoration of a lost purity, not exile and return to the Land, is the signature of the imminent eschaton” (144).

⁹⁶ C. A. Evans, “Aspects of Exile and Restoration in the Proclamation of Jesus and the Gospels,” in Scott, ed., *Exile* 299–328, is unwilling for the obvious imagery of re-enacting the conquest of the promised land (the parting of the Jordan, the collapse of city walls) to stand without pressing the corollary that such movements must have “regarded Israel as in a state of bondage, even exile” (305).

those living in the land at the time of Jesus, who attended the Temple regularly or in pilgrimage, thought of themselves as still in exile.⁹⁷

Second, it should be evident from the outline of Jewish expectation in #1 above that there was no single comprehensive grand narrative shaping the thought of Jesus' contemporaries. Return of the scattered outcasts to the land was certainly a prominent feature, but did not itself constitute the grand narrative of which all other elements of expectation were only a part. A major weakness of Wright's "major hypothesis" therefore is his assumption that "return from exile" (and Yahweh's return to Zion) were in effect the only "controlling stories" which need to be considered as the framework for Jesus' kingdom preaching. But there is plenty of evidence that other motifs of Jewish expectation were very much in play in Jesus' teaching as recalled by his disciples. I list them in the order given above (under 1. Introduction):

- (2) the removal of disabilities and defects (e.g. Matt 11:5/Luke 7:22);
- (3) the imagery of a great feast (e.g. Matt 22:2–10/Luke 14:16–24);
- (7) probably an eschatological pilgrimage of the nations (Matt 8:11–12/Luke 13:28–29);
- (8) the meek inheriting the land (Matt 5:5);
- (9) suffering (e.g. Matt 5:11–12/Luke 6:22–23);
- (11) the defeat of Satan (e.g. Mark 3:27 pars.);
- (12) (final) judgment (e.g. Matt 11:21–24? Luke 10:12–15).

Consequently, the question posed above (under 2. Three Key Questions, *A Grand Narrative?*) returns with renewed force: whether the evidence justifies the major hypothesis of a single, coherent grand narrative "controlling" the range of Jewish expectation at the time of Jesus.⁹⁸

Third, the most serious weakness of Wright's grand hypothesis is his inability to demonstrate that the narrative of return from exile was a controlling factor in Jesus' own teaching. It will not do simply

⁹⁷ See further F. G. Downing, "Exile in Formative Judaism," *Making Sense in (and of) the First Christian Century* (JSNTS 197; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2000) 148–68.

⁹⁸ Cf. M. J. Borg's criticism of Sanders (using different imagery): "the lens of 'Jesus as prophet of restoration eschatology' enables us to see too limited a range of data and forces us to set aside too much data. Its explanatory power is inadequate" (*Jesus in Contemporary Scholarship* [Valley Forge: Trinity Press International, 1994] 81).

to insert passages into the assumed narrative framework, or to read the Jesus tradition through spectacles provided by the controlling story, as though by invocation of the mantra, “end of exile,” “return from exile,” the interpretation of these traditions becomes clear.⁹⁹ “Serious verification” requires demonstration of at least a fair number of plausible echoes and allusions to return from exile within the Jesus tradition itself. The most plausible is the parable of the prodigal son, who repents and returns from “a far country” (Luke 15:11–24).¹⁰⁰ But the grand narrative of return from exile proves inadequate to explain the second half of the parable, where the refusal of the elder brother to accept the younger clearly works with the different motif of contrasting pairs.¹⁰¹ And Wright hardly strengthens his case by giving a pivotal place to the parable of the sower (Mark 4:2–8 pars.).¹⁰² The problem is not that an allusion to the idea of the returnees from exile as seed being sown (again) in the land is farfetched.¹⁰³ It is rather that planting and fruitful growth are metaphors of much more diverse application,¹⁰⁴ and that the parable’s imagery of different soils and outcomes more naturally invites a different line of thought and application from that of return from exile. The calling of twelve disciples certainly evokes thought of eschatological restoration or renewal of Israel (the twelve tribes),¹⁰⁵ but if

⁹⁹ An unsatisfactory feature of Wright’s treatment is his willingness simply to cite texts without any supporting analysis (e.g. *Jesus* 166, 179–80).

¹⁰⁰ Wright, *Jesus* 125–31.

¹⁰¹ Contrasting pairs is one of the most characteristic features of Jesus’ parables—e.g. shrunk/unshrunk cloth, new/old wineskins (Mark 2:21–22 pars.), two ways (Matt 7:13–14/Luke 13:23–24), wise and foolish builders (Matt 7:24–27/Luke 6:47–49), two sons (Matt 21:28–30), wise and foolish maidens (Matt 25:1–13), prodigal son (Luke 15:11–32), pharisee and taxcollector (Luke 18:9–14). As the corollary to his reading of the parable, Wright (*Jesus* 127) infers that the elder brother would have been identified with the Samaritans (who objected to the return of the exiles to Judea), in complete disregard of the setting indicated by Luke (the parable was addressed to Pharisees’ objection to Jesus eating with “sinners”—Luke 15:1–3).

¹⁰² Wright, *Jesus* 230–9.

¹⁰³ Jer 24:6; 32:41; Hos 2:23; Amos 9:15 (cited by Wright, *Jesus* 232–3 n. 128).

¹⁰⁴ Of the passages cited by Wright, consider Jer 31:27 and 4 *Ezra* 8:41; the parable could have evoked the classic reminder of God’s part in the agricultural process (Isa 28:23–26); for the imagery of fruitful growth see e.g. BAGD, *karpōs* 2, *karpophoreō* 2; at one point Wright himself assumes the identity of “seed” and “word,” as the (later) explanation invites (*Jesus* 238), but he seems unconcerned that the explanation attached to the parable (which he includes with the parable itself) shows no awareness of Wright’s “controlling story” (Mark 4:13–20 *et par.*).

¹⁰⁵ Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* 98–102.

“return-from-exile theology” was a prominent feature of the rationale,¹⁰⁶ it is surprising that so little is made of it.¹⁰⁷ And the first petition of the Lord’s Prayer (“May your name be sanctified”), could evoke the prophecy of Ezek 36:22–28.¹⁰⁸ For the most part, however, Wright is content to read the Jesus tradition through the lens of his grand narrative without further attempt at justification.¹⁰⁹ But in squeezing the diversity of Jesus’ proclamation of the kingdom into conformity with that single controlling story¹¹⁰ he misses much that is of central significance within that proclamation—not least Jesus’ own critique of Israel’s current leadership and concern for the “poor” and “sinners.”¹¹¹

¹⁰⁶ Wright, *Jesus* 430–1; Evans, “Exile” 317–8. Even so, the thought would be of the outcasts of Israel restored to the land and reunited with those already living there, not that the latter were still in exile.

¹⁰⁷ The dominant motif in Luke 13:28–29/Matt 8:11–12 is that of eschatological reversal, rather than of the return of the Jewish dispersion (*pace* Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* 219–20).

¹⁰⁸ Wright, *Jesus* 293; and particularly G. Lohfink, *Jesus and Community* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985) 15–17. S. McKnight, *A New Vision for Israel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999) also presses the implication of the first petition of the Lord’s Prayer (24–6), though the implications are broader than simply the restoration of Israel to the land (J. A. Fitzmyer, *Luke* [AB 18a; New York: Doubleday, 1985] 898–9). And it is hardly enough to respond to the question, why did Jesus not use “exile” terms, by simply affirming “Kingdom language is ‘end of exile’ language; ‘end of exile’ is the negative to the positive ‘kingdom’” (*New Vision* 83 n. 51).

¹⁰⁹ Evans also comes to Wright’s support by finding other indications of exile theology in Jesus’ teaching (“Exile” 316–27): the “sign from heaven”—Mark 8:11–13 (dependent on Evans’ assumption that the “sign prophets” of Josephus were enacting return from exile); the allusion to Isa 56:7 in Mark 11:17 *et par.* (but an allusion to returning outcasts [Isa 56:8] is twice removed); the gathering of the elect from the ends of the earth in Mark 13:27 (the allusion is to LXX, not MT of Zech 2:6 [LXX 10]; he assumes that “the ‘elect’ . . . include the exiles of Israel”); threat of exile implied in the woes uttered against Chorazin and Bethsaida (Matt 11:21–23/Luke 10:13–15). When one has to strain so hard to find allusions to a “controlling story” it must raise serious doubts as to whether “return from exile” was indeed the “controlling” story.

¹¹⁰ For example: Jesus’ welcome of the poor was a sign of return from exile (*Jesus* 255); “forgiveness of sins is another way of saying ‘return from exile’” (268–72); Mark 13 is “the story of the real return from exile,” and the anticipated destruction of Jerusalem marks the end of exile (340–3, 358–9, 364).

¹¹¹ On the other hand, simply to deny that Jesus made any use of the theme of the return of the exiles, as J. Becker does (*Jesus of Nazareth* [New York/Berlin: de Gruyter, 1998] 129), hardly does justice to the issues raised by Wright. For Becker, creation, not salvation-history, is the focus of Jesus’ kingdom message (125–35); but the distinction owes more to a debate within German scholarship than to the Jesus tradition, and the anti-Israel overtones of 136–7 are disturbing.

In short, we can be sure that Jesus the Jew shared in his people's confidence in God with regard to Israel and the future. But otherwise we should heed postmodernism's warning against uncritical dependence on grand narratives, against the superimposition of a single meta-narrative on much more complex data.

What Kind of "Eschatology?"

What kind of "end" does the Jesus tradition envisage? The earlier discussion noted that the term ("end") was used more flexibly than discussions of Jesus' eschatology have usually allowed for. Since "end" could denote the end of an epoch, and "the end of days" did not necessarily envisage the end of time,¹¹² the idea of Jesus claiming in some sense to have fulfilled expectations for the age to come in his mission is less problematic than might at first appear.¹¹³ Similarly the issues posed by the word "apocalyptic" are a lot less clear than is often thought to be the case, since it can be used to indicate insight given by revelation, and visions of heavenly realities now as well as in the (near) future. The features usually in view in the popular use of the term are hardly prominent in the Jesus tradition: cosmic convulsions are envisaged only in Mark 13.24–25; and "divine intervention" is more implicit (particularly final judgment) than explicit, though the disputed Son of Man material does complicate the picture. Even so, the issue remains: does the Jesus tradition not attribute to Jesus also a future and final eschatological expectation, including God's kingdom come in a way not experienced hitherto, God's final triumph over evil, final judgment of the nations, a state of affairs imaged as a great feast, and resurrection from the dead to angelic existence?

A typical response has been to offer refinements of the key term "eschatology" itself. Bultmann's transposition of chronological ultimacy into existential ultimacy was a classic example. But such a proposal goes well beyond any conception of "end" drawn from language

¹¹² See above under 2. Three Key Questions, *What Do We Mean by Eschatological?*

¹¹³ Cf. Sanders' wrestling with the same sort of question (*Jesus and Judaism* 228–37). Becker tries to finesse the issue by stressing the continuity between "the present reality and the coming perfection" in Jesus' mission, "a continuous unity"; "the point of Jesus" proclamation is that from now on God's kingdom will be a reality in this world"; "the present is the beginning of God's final rule as king" (*Jesus of Nazareth* 104–7, 119–21). But does this do more than reformulate the problem?

which Jews of Jesus' time would have recognized. Crossan wants to use "eschatology" as "the wider and generic term for world-negation,"¹¹⁴ and tries to mark out a middle ground between Q's "apocalyptic eschatology" and Thomas's "ascetic eschatology" in Jesus' "ethical eschatology."¹¹⁵ But does the replacement of an apocalyptic eschatology by some form of utopian ideal "end" actually resolve the issue of Jesus' future eschatology? Here again the issue is nicely posed by Wright's treatment. He commits himself to Schweitzer's agenda of setting Jesus within the context of Jewish eschatology, but it is an eschatology whose apocalyptic features are simply cosmic sound effects.¹¹⁶ This means that Wright is able to interpret the future elements of Jesus' expectation solely in terms of Jesus' own journey to Jerusalem and Jerusalem's own destruction in 70 CE. That Jesus could have looked for anything more than that—judgment of the nations, resurrection to angelic existence, the heaven and hell of traditional Christian envisaging—Wright does not say.

The more common way forward has been the synthesis between the thesis of Schweitzer's "thoroughgoing eschatology" and the antithesis of Dodd's "realized eschatology" provided by Jeremias' inaugurated eschatology, or "eschatology that is in process of realization."¹¹⁷ Imagery such as a train drawing into a station, day beginning to dawn, the final stage of World War II begun with D-day and climaxing in V-day (appreciated by an earlier generation), has all been employed to illustrate the tension in Jesus' usage. My own pennyworth to the debate has been to note the parallel between early Christian eschatology and Jesus' own eschatology provided by reference to the Spirit in each.¹¹⁸ In Paul's perspective certainly, the Spirit experienced by the early believers was to be understood as the "first-instalment" of the kingdom whose full inheritance was yet

¹¹⁴ *Historical Jesus* 238.

¹¹⁵ See now *Birth* chs. 15–16 (particularly 279–82); cf. Theissen's & Merz's reflection on the combination of present and future in the Lord's Prayer (*Historical Jesus* 261–4): "the 'kingly rule of God' is the expression of a powerful ethical energy" (264). See also Borg, *Jesus in Contemporary Scholarship* 70–3.

¹¹⁶ *Jesus* 80–2, 96–7, 207–9. Wright is indebted to Caird, *Language* ch. 14.

¹¹⁷ Joachim Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus* (2nd ed.; London: SCM, 1963) 230 (the phrase in the original German is "*sich realisierende Eschatologie*").

¹¹⁸ J. D. G. Dunn, "Spirit and Kingdom," *ExpT* 82 (1970–71) 36–40, reprinted in *The Christ and the Spirit. Vol. 2. Pneumatology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) 133–41.

outstanding.¹¹⁹ Jesus' own experience of anointing and ministry empowered by the same Spirit/power of God may in itself have convinced him that God's longed-for (final) manifestation of his royal rule was already in evidence¹²⁰ and that its full manifestation could therefore not be long delayed.

The point is that such treatments found it impossible to deny that Jesus had expressed expectation for the imminent happening of events which did not happen. Jesus' kingdom preaching could not be disentangled from imminent expectation, with or without "apocalyptic" features. Which also means that Jesus had entertained hopes which were not fulfilled. There were "final" elements in his expectation which were not realized. Putting it bluntly, Jesus was proved wrong by the course of events. The discomfort of the conclusion for scholars who were also believers was softened by the thought both that it made more "real" the humanness of Jesus, and that such a conclusion demonstrated their own dispassionate method and scrupulous honesty: this was not the "historical Jesus" they would have wished to find!

Nor is this a conclusion I would wish to resist on my own part. I do not think the conclusion can be easily escaped that Jesus expected the kingdom to come with final outcomes which have not appeared; some may want to say not yet appeared. But there is still more to be said.

Too little attention has been paid to the character of Jewish prophetic hope. The prophetic tradition had learned to live with the failure of prophecy without denigrating the prophecies themselves.¹²¹ We have already observed how Ps 89 wrestles with the failure of the promises to maintain the Davidic line. Jeremiah's depiction of Judah's expected devastation as a return to chaos (Jer 4:23) was not regarded as a false prophecy because the end of the world did not come.¹²² Hab 2:3 provided a cue for post-biblical Judaism's wrestling

¹¹⁹ 2 Cor 1:22; 5:5; similarly Rom 8:23; cf. also Rom 8:14–17; 1 Cor 6:9–11; 15:44–50; Gal 4:6–7, 29–30; Eph 1:14. See further my *Theology of Paul* 421, 424, 469–70.

¹²⁰ Cf. M. J. Borg, *Jesus: A New Vision* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987) 198–9.

¹²¹ R. Schnackenburg, e.g., mentions texts which speak of a "near expectation"—Isa 13:6; 51:5; 56:1; Ezek 7:1–13; 12:21–25; 30:3; Joel 2:1; Zeph 1:7, 14–18 (*God's Rule and Kingdom* [Freiburg: Herder, 1963] 201 n.65).

¹²² Caird, *Language* 258–9.

with the problem of delay.¹²³ In emphasizing that many Jews were still in exile, it is easy to pass over the fact that such beliefs could be held only because the earlier hopes for return from exile had not been fulfilled—or should we say not completely filled? The resulting “dissonance,” according to Robert Carroll, “gave rise to hermeneutics,” including the transition from prophecy to apocalypse.¹²⁴ The hermeneutics included what he calls “adaptive prediction” (citing Jeremiah and Ezekiel) and realized expectation (Ezra inspired by the preaching of Second Isaiah).¹²⁵

More to the point, however, is the fact that the failed prophecies also gave rise to renewed prophecies.¹²⁶ For example, Jeremiah fully expected that after seventy years exile, both Israel and Judah would be restored to the land, and it would prosper under a restored Davidic king.¹²⁷ That hope was only partially fulfilled, and the absence of complete fulfilment caused perplexity for Zechariah (Zech 1:12). But the hope was taken up again by Daniel, among others, in one of the most famous and lastingly influential prophecies of seventy weeks of years (Dan 9:24–27). It is generally accepted that the author was writing in the Maccabean period and saw himself as standing in the final week,¹²⁸ of which half (three-and-a-half “times” = three-and-a-half years)¹²⁹ would be under foreign subjection (7:25; 8:14; 9:27). So “Daniel” fully expected that “the end of days” was imminent (12:11–13). That hope again found only partial fulfilment in the establishment of the Hasmonean kingdom. But again it was taken up by Christians attempting to articulate a clear hope for the future.¹³⁰

¹²³ A. Strobel, *Untersuchungen zum eschatologischen Verzögerungsproblem auf Grund der spätjüdisch-urchristlichen Geschichte von Habakuk 2,2ff.* (NovTSupp 2; Leiden: Brill, 1961).

¹²⁴ R. P. Carroll, *When Prophecy Failed: Reactions and Responses to failure in the Old Testament Prophetic Traditions* (London: SCM, 1979) 124–8, 212. Carroll draws on L. Festinger, et al., *When Prophecy Fails: A Social and Psychological Study of a Modern Group that Predicted the Destruction of the World* (New York: Harper & Row, 1956), and L. Festinger, *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance* (Evanston: Row, Petersen, 1957). Texts indicative of the problem of delay include Isa 10:25; Hab 2:2, 3; Joel 1:15; 2:1 (168–72).

¹²⁵ Carroll, *When Prophecy Failed* 172–7, 180–2.

¹²⁶ In what follows I draw particularly on C. L. Holman, *Till Jesus Comes: Origins of Christian Apocalyptic Expectation* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1996).

¹²⁷ E.g. Jer 25:12–13; 29:10–14; 30:3, 8–11; 31:1, 5–14; 32:36–41; 33:10–22.

¹²⁸ E.g. Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination* 87–90, 109; Holman, *Till Jesus Comes* 50–1.

¹²⁹ BDB, *mo'ed* 1b; *ad* 2.

¹³⁰ Rev 11:2–3; 12:6, 14; cf. Luke 21:24. These prophecies were influential into the patristic period (e.g. Justin, *Dial.* 32.3–4; Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* 5.25.3; 5.30.4). See also W. Adler, “The Apocalyptic Survey of History Adapted by Christians. Daniel’s

The point is this. Within Jewish prophetic/apocalyptic tradition there was some sort of recognition that the partial fulfilment of a hope did not nullify or falsify that hope. Instead the earlier hope became the basis and springboard for a fresh articulation of the same hope.

In somewhat similar reflections, Anthony Harvey observes that as a story needs an ending, so individuals looking to the future need some kind of closure or boundary to make time finite and comprehensible for them. When some crisis foreseen with the character of finality or the end comes and passes without the finality expected, it is not necessarily seen as invalidating the earlier warnings, which may simply be redirected to the next crisis.¹³¹ When the end of a prophet's story of the future did not prove to be the end, it did not rob the prophetic message of its credibility in the eyes of those who cherished his prophecy.¹³²

We could press the point by observing that any hope by its nature gives greater determinacy to what by its nature (the future) is indeterminate. For hope looks beyond the known of present and past into the unknown of the future.¹³³ And in trying to speak of the future, hope can do no other than take the patterns and structures of the known and from them attempt to construct some sort of projection into the future. That is the character of hope.¹³⁴ It gets things wrong, sometimes "hopelessly" wrong, for the future is always unknown and can only be known when it has already become the present and the past. Yet we still hope, for hope is the only way we can cope with the future which might be crippling through the fear and dread which it otherwise inspires. More to the point here, prophetic hope was not hope in the future *per se*, but hope in *God* for the future,

Prophecy of 70 Weeks," in J. C. Vanderkam & W. Adler, *The Jewish Apocalyptic Heritage in Early Christianity* (CRINT 3.4; Assen: Van Gorcum, 1996) 201–38. Indeed Daniel's seventy weeks shaped Christian eschatology well into the 18th century.

¹³¹ Harvey was writing when the threat of nuclear war was still a live one. It is interesting to note how the de-apocalypticisation of the threat of global confrontation marked by the end of the cold war coincides with a de-apocalypticisation of the message of Jesus.

¹³² A. E. Harvey, *Jesus and the Constraints of History* (London: Duckworth, 1982) ch. 4, "Jesus and Time: the Constraint of an Ending" (here 71–6, 89–90).

¹³³ "The future moves like a horizon . . . and always remains the same distance away" (Theissen & Merz, *Historical Jesus* 278).

¹³⁴ In contrast, apocalyptic eschatology is born more of despair for the present and can only depict the future in bizarre symbols, since little or nothing in the present gives substance to hope.

with concomitant concern for how that hope should determine living in the present.

Now it would be impossible to enter into prophetic psychology at this point. But I cannot help wondering whether at the time of Jesus there was more conscious reflection on this feature of prophetic hope than has been allowed for.¹³⁵ The question is whether Jesus or his first followers took such considerations into account when they made their own forward-looking eschatological statements. Or rather, whether it is not the character of prophecy to make such firm predictions, and the responsibility of the hearer, aware of the tradition, to recognize that its affirmation of old images and aspirations for the same ends should not be valued more highly than any element of prediction. Given my understanding of the fundamental role of hearing and receiving in the tradition process, the two-sidedness of oracles uttered-and-received and valued as prophecy means that no prophetic utterance, however clear and outspoken, should be considered on its own without any qualification which the hearing-receiving-re-telling involves. This mediating but also qualifying role of the tradition was no doubt one of the reasons why the "delay of the parousia" was evidently of relatively little significance for the first generation Christians.¹³⁶

What emerges from this is the possibility that the understanding of time informing the eschatology of the Jesus tradition should not be conceived as simply linear. A tradition which could use the language of "end" as flexibly as we have seen in writings of the time of Jesus should not be boxed into a mathematical image of a straight line between two points. Typology was evidently a hermeneutical device much used by teachers of Jesus' time—that is, the recognition of patterns discernible in God's past dealings with his people, and thus enabling an informed expectation regarding God's dealings with his people in the future. To locate one's time and audience within the time-frame of an ancient narrative, as Hebrews does with the wilderness wanderings of Israel (Heb. 4), and as preachers have done before and since, bespeaks an awareness that time need not

¹³⁵ As there certainly was on the concomitant problem of false prophecy. Caird is confident that "Luke and Paul did not expect their language about life after death to be taken with flat-footed literalness" (*Language* 248).

¹³⁶ E.g., already in Mark's version of the apocalyptic discourse we hear the clarificatory qualifying note added; "but the end is not yet" (13:7).

be regarded simply as the unbroken onward sequence of events. Is it then simply the case that strong affirmations regarding the “end” attest more the prophet’s conviction and assurance in God and the future as God’s, as taught from the past, than any clarity of perception regarding the “end” itself? Prophets express their trust in God for the future with an intensity of faith which makes them sure it will come tomorrow.¹³⁷ The prophet still “gets it wrong” in temporal terms; but the tradition does not value the prophecy simply for its chronology.

What probably needs to be stressed in all this is that both Jesus’ contemporaries and the first Christians could live with the disappointment of failed prophecy without that failure disturbing the core faith which found expression in the prophecy. Every so often, when the strain became too much, or in particular writings, they cried out, “How long, O Lord?” But for the most part they simply got on with living. The prophets turned from contemplating the future and in the same breath addressed the pressing issues of the present. Even writers of apocalypses no doubt continued to do Torah, to pray and to live out lives of obedience as they saw it. The Qumran covenanters seem to have lived constructively out of a tension of prophecy fulfilled in their community and eschatological climaxes yet awaited.¹³⁸ If Paul is in any degree typical, the first Christians certainly lived in and from the tension between the already of eschatological hope fulfilled and the not yet of what was still worked for and awaited.¹³⁹

Was it different for Jesus? It is worth noting that Matthew’s tradition of the Lord’s Prayer seems to have added the third petition (“May your will be done, as in heaven, so on earth” – Matt 6:10b), presumably as an explanatory elaboration of the second petition (“May your kingdom come” – 6:10a).¹⁴⁰ Does this indicate how the

¹³⁷ Cf. McKnight, *New Vision* 12, 129–30, 138–9.

¹³⁸ A. M. Schwemer, “Gott als König und seine Königsherrschaft in den Sabbatliedern aus Qumran,” in M. Hengel & A. M. Schwemer, eds., *Königsherrschaft Gottes und himmlischer Kult im Judentum, Urchristentum und in der hellenistischen Welt* (WUNT 55; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1991) 45–118, notes that “the juxtaposition of present and eschatological understanding of God’s kingship receives fresh illumination through the Sabbath Songs: the eschatological expectation of God’s kingship on earth has its basis in the present cultic celebration of the kingship of God in heaven” (117).

¹³⁹ See e.g. my *Theology of Paul* 461–98.

¹⁴⁰ The most obvious explanation for such a difference in the two versions of the Prayer (Matt 6:9–13/Luke 11:2–4) is liturgical elaboration (J. Jeremias, *The Prayers of Jesus* [London: SCM, 1967] 85–94).

petition for the kingdom to come was understood early on? Either that the kingdom of God would be recognized (as present) when God's will was being done (on earth), or that seeking for the kingdom would be unavailing without striving to do God's will. Matthew himself seems to draw that conclusion (Matt 7:21). Either way, Matthew's tradition does not treat the prayer for the kingdom's coming as an aspiration which can stand alone. As Luke's subsequent account was to put it: questions about the kingdom's future had their place (and sky-gazing was all very well), but what mattered now was the mission (Acts 1:5–11).

The Kingdom as Metaphor?

Before we paused to take stock, the preceding line of reflection was leading us into the problems of conceptuality, where the basic problem is that of language itself. Language as it were forces us into a linguistic/semiotic box, with words having to serve (inadequately) as both windows of insight and lines of communication. In doing both, they do neither very effectively. The basic issue, then, is how language deals with time, and in particular with the future.

Paul Ricoeur has observed that it is narrative which gives history its temporal flow, with the idea of beginning and end usually inherent in narrative.¹⁴¹ Narrative draws on human experience, and in evoking a response from the reader mediates between what has been and what is yet to be.¹⁴² But if we cannot understand the history of which Jesus was a part as a single (grand) narrative, what then? It is unsatisfactory to conclude that the only alternative option is to envisage a multiplicity of narratives for first century Jews. For the undoubtedly different readings of God's hand in history which we find in the "Judaisms" of the time were still perceived as different readings of the same narrative, as given in Israel's scriptures. The different readings were, in effect, variations on the common trust in

¹⁴¹ P. Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, vol. 1 ch. 3.

¹⁴² This is my much too simplified attempt to draw out for my own purposes Ricoeur's "threefold mimesis," that is, his distinction between *mimesis*₁, *mimesis*₂ and *mimesis*₃, in which I acknowledge my debt also to D. Pellauer's Foreword to M. Joy, ed., *Paul Ricoeur and Narrative* (Calgary: University of Calgary, 1997) xiv–xvi. In correlation with the reflections of the previous section (*What Kind of "Eschatology"?*), one might note the inevitability of some "slippage" between the three phases of the process.

God to work out his purpose for humankind and creation. What is lacking is a single *complete* narrative wholly agreed as to its details. What we have in Israel's eschatology (#1) is a common basic outline of trust and hope elaborated and supplemented only by flashes of insight and inspiration. We have a narrative somewhat like a fragmentary Dead Sea scroll: we know that (most of) the fragments belong together (though some may come from an unknown document); but piecing them together is literally beyond us, because so much is missing or has been worn away. The incompleteness of the narrative means that the temporal flow breaks down, and we do not know how to relate episodes/visions to one another. An alternative image is that of a film full of flashbacks, where it is not always clear whether the scene portrayed at any moment is past or present. With the eschatology of the Jesus tradition we have as it were a film full of flash-forwards, but posing the same problem for the viewer. If we're not confused, then something is wrong: we are imposing our order on an intrinsically unordered narrative. The shattered mirror of prophecy gives a Picasso-esque image, and how the often jagged fragments fit into a whole is by no means clear.

Another term which has proved useful in such discussions is "*myth*"—myth understood not in the sense of "*unhistorical*," but in the sense of denoting that which is *beyond* history, that for which scenes drawn on the template of human history can only function pictorially or allusively.¹⁴³ Biblical scholars have become accustomed to using the term in relation to the "time" of beginnings, the *Urzeit*, the opening chapters of Genesis. This is a "time" which precedes history—historical time, by definition, being time which is in principle capable of being investigated by the normal tools of historical research. *Urzeit* is "pre-history time," if we may put it so. What then about "post-history time," *Endzeit*? One of the non-linear features of Jewish eschatology is the expectation that *Endzeit* will be as *Urzeit*, the "end" will return to the beginning, heaven will be paradise restored. Which is also to say that post-history time will inevitably share the mythical character of pre-history time. Any attempt to speak about the final future will have to use pictorial or allusive

¹⁴³ My use of the term "myth" is thus limited. I am aware of the extensive debate regarding its much more extensive use; K. W. Bolle & P. Ricoeur, "Myth," in M. Eliade, ed., *Encyclopedia of Religion* (New York: Macmillan, 1987) 10.261–82; R. A. Oden, "Myth and Mythology," *ABD* 4.946–56.

terms, unable to assert correlation between word and event with the same confidence as in dealing with historical time. To offer another analogy, history is somewhat like an autumn/fall day, a day which begins with mists slowly clearing and ends with mist steadily gathering again. During the day, vision before and behind is clear enough. But in the beginning and ending periods, when it is far from clear when "day" has really begun and really ended, no clear sense of position—far less of direction—is possible for one caught in the mists.

As an alternative mode of expression we have already mentioned Perrin's suggestion that the kingdom be seen as a "tensive symbol," and Wright's rebuttal of Schweitzer for taking apocalyptic language literally. I prefer the term "*metaphor*" precisely because, as I understand it, the metaphor is not readily translatable into something else. In the end Perrin wants to be able to unpack the tensive symbol of the kingdom into a variety of referants. And in the end Wright equally wants to translate the apocalyptic language of cosmic convulsion and "end of the world" into the concrete event of Jerusalem's destruction.¹⁴⁴ But if we follow Ricoeur and Martin Soskice, metaphor is not a synonym or alternative for another linguistic mode of description. Metaphor says what cannot be said otherwise, at least so effectively or so well and possibly not at all. The metaphor not only expresses the hope, as though for something else. The metaphor is the hope. One can still ask what the metaphor refers to, but the appropriate correlative question is not, What does this *mean*?, but What does this *evoke*?¹⁴⁵ We do not ask "what it means" in regard to a piece of music like Beethoven's Eroica symphony, or a piece of art like Picasso's "Guernica," or a poem like William Blake's "Jerusalem"; they appeal to heart more than to head. It is somewhat so with a metaphor. The troping effect "turns" the metaphor from its logical referent and gives its appeal a non-rational, almost subliminal quality.

¹⁴⁴ Wright is indebted to Caird, *Language* 266, at this point. But in asserting that the biblical writers "regularly used end-of-the-world language metaphorically to refer to that which they knew well was not the end of the world" (256), Caird is referring primarily to Dodd's realized eschatology (253).

¹⁴⁵ Cf. Caird's understanding of "expressive language": "Whereas the object of referential language is to clarify and convey an idea, the object of expressive language is to capture and communicate or to respond to an experience" (*Language* 15–6).

It should not occasion any surprise, therefore, when a sequence of metaphors “describing” a particular subject do not gel with one another, for they are always aspectival and fragmentary by their very nature, mood-evoking more than meaning-communicative. So scholars should not make too much of the crudities and inconsistencies in the hope expressed in the metaphor of the kingdom of God, as though it could be expressed otherwise and more adequately. For centuries Jews have hoped for the age to come and Christians have hoped for heaven, without either having any clear idea of what they were hoping for beyond these terms and the most prominent images which fill out the core metaphor.

Again we ask, was it any different for Jesus and for those who first treasured and performed his words? Perhaps we should simply infer that the “the kingdom of God” for Jesus was an alternative way of speaking of the age to come, of heaven, and of the way heaven impacts on earth. It had reference, but no precision of “meaning”—hence all the variegated, sometimes inconsistent images. But its powerful symbolism evidently motivated Jesus as no other image or metaphor did.

JESUS RESEARCH AND NEAR EASTERN ARCHAEOLOGY: REFLECTIONS ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

James H. Charlesworth

This essay is an attempt to survey how and in what ways archaeology may be important in Jesus Research. The review is focused on four areas: a brief scan of the preeminent publications in this new field, an assessment of the major archaeological discoveries in Israel for Jesus Research, a glimpse at three debates among experts, and intermittently—as well as in the final pages—a plea for New Testament scholars to grasp more fully the fundamental importance of sociological contexts, informed by archaeological research, in all attempts to recreate the life and times of Jesus of Nazareth. It is an honor to dedicate it to Peder Borgen with whom, for at least thirty years, I have enjoyed conversations about Philo, the Gospel of John, Jesus, and the importance of setting texts in historical contexts, informed by historiography and archaeology.

1. *A Review of Publications*

One of the first studies that focused on how archaeology was beginning to shape and define Jesus Research was *Jesus Within Judaism: New Light from Exciting Archaeological Discoveries* (1988).¹ “Jesus Research” can be regarded as beginning in 1980, which followed the so-called New Quest for the Historical Jesus. The latter was shaped by theological, even existential, concerns. Jesus Research attracts not only Christian scholars but also Jewish experts, like Flusser and Vermes, who have no yearning to find a Jesus worth following. Jesus Research is primarily inquisitive, and not shaped by theological agendas. It appeared after exceptional archaeological discoveries—like the Qumran Scrolls and the Nag Hammadi Codices—and the often phenomenal disclosures from excavations in Galilee, Judaea, the Jordan

¹ J. H. Charlesworth, *Jesus Within Judaism* (ABRL, 1; Garden City: Doubleday, 1988).

Valley, and on the Mediterranean Coast. The leading question in the New Quest was “What does Jesus Christ mean to me?” The central questions in Jesus Research are “Who was Jesus of Nazareth, what can be learned about his time and place, and how do these new revelations help us recreate his life and teachings?” Thus, while the insights of Martin Heidegger (1889–1976) on “time and being” shaped the New Quest, historiography, sociology, and especially archaeology are intermittently defining Jesus Research. While a consensus is always illusive, New Testament scholars generally agree that a paradigm shift has occurred in the study of the historical Jesus.² Few of us now wish to ignore what is being learned archaeologically about life in Galilee and Judaea during the time of Jesus.

Surveys. There are vast problems in attempting to survey the field of Jesus and archaeology. Foremost among them seems to be an awareness that there may not yet exist such a “field” of study. On the one hand, we are confronted with the vast amount of tomes and articles on archaeology with no concern for the New Testament, let alone Jesus. On the other hand, we are faced with the veritable flood of books and articles on Jesus, but most of them show no concern for or knowledge of archaeology. This focused survey of Jesus and archaeology is, therefore, organized so that the best surveys the most reliable encyclopedias, and the most helpful one-volume works will be placed in the spotlight.

The most helpful survey for our purposes seems to be Jonathan L. Reed’s *Archaeology and the Galilean Jesus* (2000).³ Reed has been involved in archaeological digs, and presently serves as Co-Director of the Sepphoris Acropolis Excavations. His major purpose is to share with a wide audience the developments in field archaeology in Galilee and to indicate how and why these are important in Jesus Research.

² After this study had been completed, I heard about J. L. Reed’s and J. D. Crossan’s collaborative effort on Jesus and archaeology; see their book entitled *Excavating Jesus* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2001).

³ J. L. Reed, *Archaeology and the Galilean Jesus: A Re-examination of the Evidence* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2000). For a less critical and informed treatment of archaeology and Jesus Research, but one that includes Judaea and even the Diaspora, see John McRay, *Archaeology and the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker, 1991). Too out-of-date is J. Finegan’s *Archaeology of the New Testament: The Life of Jesus and the Beginning of the Early Church* (rev. ed.; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

Reed features Sepphoris and Capernaum in studying the historical Jesus. That is because Reed has spent over a decade helping to excavate and analyze these two sites.⁴ He warns that studies on Jesus and Sepphoris have been distorted by false dichotomies, such as Hellenism versus Judaism and urban versus rural. He points out that Antipas only started a tendency towards Hellenization that is evident in later *realia* and architectural remains.

Reed organizes his book under three parts. First, he examines the diverse scholarly opinions regarding the identity of the Galileans. Where they primarily Jews or transplanted Judaeans, as S. Klein and S. Freyne contend? Where they essentially Gentiles or Itureans that were forced to become Jewish by the Hasmoneans, as E. Schürer and W. Bauer claimed? Or where they descendants of the northern Israelites, as A. Alt and R. Horsley have argued? Reed points out that archaeological work discloses that there was no continuity from the Iron Age to the first century BCE (*pace* Alt and Horsley). He shows that there is no evidence of the semi-nomadic Itureans in Lower Galilee (*pace* Schürer and Baruer). He demonstrates that Galilee and Judaea were united culturally (Hasmonean coins are abundant only in Judaea, Galilee, and the Golan), and that Galileans and Judaeans shared a common heritage.

There are four religious indicators of a cultural homogeneity between Galilean Jews and Judaeans. These are the discovery in both provinces, and virtually nowhere else, of stone vessels and *mikva'ot* for purity, common burial techniques, and the lack of pig bones among discarded animal remains.

Many Galileans loved the Temple and perhaps considered it the *axis mundi* (cf. *Jubilees*). Surely, there is now abundant archaeological evidence that the religious roots of the Galilean Jews lead deep into Judaea and Jerusalem.

Second, Reed is interested in discerning the demographics of cities and villages in Galilee. He shows that scholars have inflated the population of Capernaum from 1,000 (Loffreda and Bagatti; Strange in *IDBSup*) to 15,000 (Meyers and Strange) and even to 25,000 inhabitants (H. C. Kee). By measuring the circumscribed area of the ruins

⁴ If he had been involved in the excavations at Bethsaida, Reed would have said more about that site than two sentences, and they are about its relevance for assessing why Jesus may not have visited Sepphoris (see p. 133).

and the density of population, evident from extant private dwellings, and by comparing these with what can be known about Ostia Antica and Pompeii, Reed estimates that the population of Capernaum during the time of Jesus could have been as high as 1,700. Because of tombs 300 meters north of the shore, Reed estimates the size of Capernaum to be only six to ten hectares; thus, about 600 to 1,500 dwelt in it during Jesus' time. If Nazareth was less than 400, then Capernaum was "one of the larger villages."⁵ It nevertheless contrasts with the largest cities in Lower Galilee, Sepphoris and Tiberias, which had slightly less than 12,000 inhabitants.

Reed rightly states that the crucial question is "not where Jesus was in Capernaum, but what Capernaum of Jesus was like."⁶ I am convinced that much more data needs to be collected before we can be confident that Capernaum was not an urban center (Downing), but a small fishing village (Bagatti, Loffreda, Strange), as now seems probable.

Capernaum is about four kilometers west of the Jordan, the border separating the territories of Antipas and of Philip. While it did have a tollhouse, Capernaum was not on a major international route. It had no major public or civic buildings, and grew rather than was planned. It had no walls. The foundation under the fifth-century synagogue may be only the remains of a gathering place, and the Roman *balneum* (bathhouse) dates from the second century CE and reveals that Roman Legionnaires were here during the time of Hadrian (and not before the First Revolt).

Not one *mikva* has been found in Capernaum. How do we explain this startling discovery? Reed contends it is because of the nearness of the lake, the toughness of the basalt, and the lack of affluence.

He is certainly correct to point out the lack of affluence. Houses were poorly constructed. The stones were not shaped by craftsmen as in Sepphoris, and the roofs were simply thatched with reeds. While Capernaum was probably a simple fishing and agricultural village, it was Jewish, as evidenced by Herodian stone vessels. None of the latter, however, in contrast to Sepphoris was made on a large lathe.

According to Luke, a centurian was present in Capernaum (Luke

⁵ Reed, *Archaeology*, 152.

⁶ Reed, *Archaeology*, 143.

7:1–10). This—as is well known—has been hotly debated by New Testament scholars. Reed contends that a centurian was probably there, but he was not the head of 100 Roman legionaires. Reed thinks he “was likely an official in Antipas’s administrative and military apparatus” (p. 162).

This judgment is well conceived and expressed. Unlike Nazareth, Capernaum was close to gentile territory and a border crossing into ancient Palestine; it might need a Roman soldier, especially an experienced officer. A centurian, as S. Safrai has shown, could have been financially able and religiously motivated, to help cover the costs of constructing a synagogue. The modest basalt foundations beneath the white limestone synagogue in Capernaum may be “vestiges of the synagogue that the centurian built.”⁷

Third, Reed completes his work with reflections on the provenience of the Q document. Since that study exceeds the focus of the present report, it will not be included. Suffice it to state that he places Q in Galilee, most likely in “the region around Capernaum on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee.”⁸ The conclusion is based on the sites predominant and central in Q: Capernaum, Chorazin, and Bethsaida.

Thanks to Reed’s honesty, it is easy to contend that he has depended too much on anecdotal evidence, employed sociological models in far too eclectic a manner, and developed his thoughts from intuitions shaped while engaged in archaeological work.⁹ Many archaeologists will warn that any type of synthesis at the present is premature.

Reed intends to focus on examining “the patterns of evidence in the material culture that impinge on the study of Christian origins,” but can one focus only on Jesus Research and only on “one geographical area, Galilee,”¹⁰ without distorting the study of Christian origins?¹¹

⁷ S. Safrai, “The Synagogue the Centurian Built,” *Jerusalem Perspective* 55 (1998) 12–14.

⁸ Reed, *Archaeology*, 182.

⁹ Reed, *Archaeology*, xi.

¹⁰ Reed, *Archaeology*, 3.

¹¹ J. L. Reed’s own preoccupation with Galilean archaeology leads him to miss the vast amount of archaeological work, since 1968, that has exposed life and society in Jerusalem before 70 CE and during the time of Jesus. Thus, his comments are often off track; note, especially, his misleading claim that in Jesus Research the focus is “increasingly on the particularities of the region at hand, and in the case of Jesus, Galilee” (p. 7).

Surely, other portions of the New Testament are also important for this research. Excavations in Judaea, and Jerusalem especially, have unearthed data fundamental for this type of work.

As the title of his book indicates, Reed has concentrated only on Galilee. That is fine, but—forgetting his focus, he makes many statements that are misleading or false. He claims that “the major cities in Palestine” were Caesarea Maritima and Scythopolis, and that “the major urban centers in the Levant” were Caesarea Maritima, Scythopolis, and Tyre (94, 96). His view never moves below Galilee and Samaria into Judaea. Excavations in the Old City of Jerusalem prove that before 70 CE, Jerusalem was a major metropolis with elegant houses, wide impressively paved streets, palaces, monumental tombs, and perhaps the most magnificent temple in the world before 70. Jerusalem was the leading city in ancient Palestine and one of the major urban centers in the Levant. If Caesarea Maritima and Scythopolis respectively had 20,000 and 40,000 inhabitants (p. 94), Jerusalem may have held over 50,000 and much more, if the ruins north of the Damascus Gate indicate pre-70 habitations within Jerusalem.

Scythopolis was by no means “Palestine’s largest and perhaps wealthiest city” (p. 95). While the grandeurs of Caesarea Maritima and Scythopolis are obvious, the architecture frequently postdates 70 CE. These two cities only on exception equaled the opulence and grandeur of some of the pre-70 CE palaces and palatial dwellings in the Upper City of Jerusalem. Moreover, nothing in them compares to the Temple area and its surroundings.

Furthermore, Reeds’ numerical figures are presented without the requisite use of subjunctives. It is not clear that Italian cities provide a reliable grid for Galilean cities. There is no epigraphic evidence for ascertaining the demography of any city or village in pre-70 CE Galilee. Likewise, any estimate of Tiberias’ size is now impossible; the excavations neither clarify its perimeters nor intimate the density of population. Moreover, it is often impossible to distinguish between Antipas’ initial work and the expansions required later by the flow of Jews into Galilee, especially after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70.

Reed’s archaeological work only in Galilee seems to have led him to claim that “Jesus’ ministry is to be located in Galilee and that he was a Galilean” (p. 10). He has followed only the Synoptics’ account of Jesus’ career. The Fourth Gospel situates a significant part of Jesus’ ministry in the south, in Samaria and Judaea. Is it devoid of

historical data and importance? Those who are contributing to the study of the historical Jesus now depend not only on the Synoptics but also on the Gospel of John. Among those contribution to Jesus Research who conclude that John is reliable historically are P. Fredriksen in her *Jesus of Nazareth: King of the Jews*,¹² B. Chilton in his *Rabbi Jesus*,¹³ and B. D. Ehrman in his *Jesus: Apocalyptic Prophet of the New Millennium*.¹⁴ Many of the experts who gathered in Jerusalem for the millennium celebration on “Jesus and Archaeology,” notably the Johannine experts Paul N. Anderson and Urban C. van Wahlde, intermittently presented a surprising number of links behind what is recorded in John and what is being unearthed in Galilee and Judaea, especially in Herodian Jerusalem.¹⁵ Long ago, Peder Borgen showed that, in pursuing Jesus Research, one cannot ignore the Gospel of John; it preserves a Passion tradition that in many places is independent of the Synoptics.¹⁶

These comments do not suggest that Reed’s book is weak. It is superb and certainly deserves to be taken seriously. He intermittently shows how the different settings of the Evangelists altered traditions and how “their narrative worlds shape the picture of Galilee.”¹⁷ *Inter alia*, he astutely shows why it is implausible that Cynic philosophical schools should be imagined at Sepphoris; after all it was a city populated by religious Jews.¹⁸ Reed’s work should be supplemented with an archaeological study of Jesus in Judaea, especially Jerusalem. Reed wisely points out that the main contribution of archaeology in Jesus Research is “in its ability to reconstruct his social world.”¹⁹ That is, archaeology should be studied, along with anthropology and sociology, in imagining and describing the social world of Jesus and the Palestinian Jesus Movement.

Reed rightly utters a “plea for giving archaeology a more prominent voice” in Jesus Research.²⁰ This timely task is facilitated by the

¹² New York, 1999.

¹³ New York, 2000.

¹⁴ New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

¹⁵ Their papers will be included in the forthcoming volume, *Jesus and Archaeology*, ed. J. H. Charlesworth (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002).

¹⁶ See esp. Borgen, *Logos was the True Light* (Publications edited by the Department of Religious Studies, University of Trondheim 9; Trondheim: Tapir, 1983) 67–80.

¹⁷ Reed, *Archaeology*, 160, cf. 212.

¹⁸ Reed, *Archaeology*, 135.

¹⁹ Reed, *Archaeology*, 18.

²⁰ Reed, *Archaeology*, 213.

recent publication of two major and multi-volume encyclopedias. Each is important, but neither is interested in or devoted to Jesus Research.

In 1993 Ephraim Stern edited the four volume *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land (NEAEHL)*.²¹ It is authoritative, arranged alphabetically, and richly illustrated. In this encyclopedia one may find some of the most erudite discussions of major archaeological sites, such as Jerusalem, Caesarea Maritima, Capernaum, Nazareth, Bethlehem, Scythopolis, Jericho, and Sepphoris. Stern's edited volumes are the most important and authoritative source for studying archaeology in "the Holy Land." The contributions are composed usually by experts who have excavated the site discussed and the focus is on biblical sites. Yet, as is so obvious in the world of archaeology, almost all entries are rapidly becoming dated. Sadly, however, in *NEAEHL* there is virtually no interest in Jesus' life and teachings.

The second major encyclopedia on archaeology was edited in 1997 by Eric Meyers. It consists of five volumes and is entitled *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East*.²² This work is not devoted to biblical archaeology but has valuable entries on some sites essential for a study of Jesus and archaeology. Singularly important are the entries on Bethsaida, Biblical Temple, Burial Practices, Capernaum, Ceramics of the Hellenistic and Roman Periods (vol. 1), Cities of the Hellenistic and Roman Periods, coins, First Jewish Revolt, Galilee, Galilee Boat (vol. 2), Herodian Jericho, Inscriptions of the Hellenistic and Roman Periods, Jericho, Jerusalem, Lamps, Magdala, Medicine (vol. 3), Nabateans, Nag Hammadi, Ossuary, Palestine in the Persian through Roman Periods, Parthians, Ritual Baths, Roads, Roman Empire, Sepphoris (vol. 4), Synagogue Inscriptions and Synagogues, and finally Tiberias (vol. 5).

Perhaps, the most reliable, insightful, and user-friendly one volume encyclopedia for biblical archaeology has been Avraham Negev's *The Archaeological Encyclopedia of the Holy Land*.²³ Now, with the help

²¹ E. Stern, ed., *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land* (4 vols.; New York, London: Simon & Schuster, 1993).

²² E. M. Meyers, ed., *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East* (5 vols.; New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

²³ See A. Negev, *The Archaeological Encyclopedia of the Holy Land* (3rd ed.; New York, London: Prentice Hall Press, 1990).

of about 100 experts, Shimon Gibson has revised and expanded this valuable resource. New or revised entries and sections include the following: Jesus, John the Baptist, Josephus, Philo, Dead Sea Scrolls, Old Testament Apocrypha, Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, astrology, and serpents. The volume will be especially helpful to New Testament specialists, since it avoids jargon, opaque *termini technici*, and is designed for a wide audience.

2. *Archaeological Discoveries and Jesus Research*

A convenient way to begin a survey of the most recent archaeological developments important for Jesus Research is to focus on sites, villages, and cities. My 1988 book, *Jesus Within Judaism: New Light from Exciting Archaeological Discoveries*,²⁴ signaled seven primary discoveries for Jesus Research. Now, these will be assessed in light of developments since the book was published in 1988. The presentation will be from the least to the most important discoveries for Jesus Research.

The *seventh* most significant discovery was the first identification of synagogues in the Land that antedate 70 CE. On the one hand, it is surprising that no pre-70 CE synagogues have been identified at Caesarea Maritima, Jerusalem, Machaerus, or Tiberias. On the other hand, pre-70 CE synagogues have been uncovered at Gamla,²⁵ Masada (a renovation by Zealots),²⁶ and the Herodium (again, only in a renovation by Zealots).²⁷ Of course, there are scholars who contend that there is no evidence that the structures identified as synagogues in

²⁴ Charlesworth, *Jesus Within Judaism: New Light from Exciting Archaeological Discoveries* (Anchor Bible Reference Library 1; New York, London: Doubleday, 1988).

²⁵ See S. Gutman, *Gamla: A City in Rebellion* (Israel: Ministry of Defence, 1994 [in Hebrew]) 18–19, 88–89, 143, and esp. 99–108; and Gutmann in *NEAEHL* 2.459–63.

²⁶ E. Netzer, “The Synagogue of Masada (Locs 1042–1043),” in *Masada III: The Yigael Yadin Excavations 1963–1965: Final Reports* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1991) 402–38. For a photograph, see Charlesworth, *The Millennium Guide for Pilgrims to the Holy Land* (North Richland Hills: Texas: BIBAL, 2000) 181.

²⁷ See esp. G. Foerster, “The Synagogues at Masada and Herodium,” in *Ancient Synagogues Revealed*, ed. L. I. Levine (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1981) 24–29. For recent research on pre-70 CE synagogues, see the following: D. Urman and P. V. M. Flesher, eds., *Ancient Synagogues: Historical Analyses and Archaeological Discovery*, 2 vols. (StPb 47.1–2; Leiden and New York: Brill, 1995); L. I. Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2000); Levine,

these places were designed for religious purposes;²⁸ some experts claim that no building can be identified as a synagogue until the third century CE.²⁹ Such voices represent the minority; the majority of scholars have now concluded that we have uncovered first-century synagogues in ancient Palestine.

To the list of pre-70 synagogues at least one more might be added. It is at Jericho, and according to E. Netzer, it may be the oldest, since it was destroyed by the earthquake of 31 BCE and was not restored. He argues that the “synagogue building (Figs. 2,3) developed in two or three stages, starting either in the reign of Jannaeus (103–76 BCE), in that of his widow Queen Salome (76–67 BCE), or in that of one of her rival sons (67 BCE onward).”³⁰ In the western part, there was a large hall (16.2 × 11.1 m.); in the eastern part, were seven rooms and a small courtyard (8.4 × 5.1 m.). To the south of the “synagogue” is a *mikva*.

Perhaps, however, this building was not a place of worship but a building to serve public needs; it may not then have been a synagogue. A minor water channel bisected the so-called synagogue; this would be unexpected, indeed exceptional, in a synagogue from any date. The alleged “niche” may be merely a cupboard for storing documents. Finally, the additions of a *triclinium* and a “kitchen” to the “synagogue hall” during its “last phase” would desecrate a synagogue.³¹ Since it would be Jews who renovated an earlier Jewish structure, I have some doubts that this building had ever been a synagogue.

ed., *The Synagogue in Late Antiquity* (Philadelphia: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1987); S. Fine and E. M. Meyers, “Synagogues,” *OEAANE* 4.118–23; H. Bloedhorn and G. Hüttenmeister, “The Synagogue,” in *The Early Roman Period*, ed. W. Horbury, W. D. Davies, and J. Sturdy (The Cambridge History of Judaism vol. 3; Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University, 1999) 267–97.

²⁸ See esp. H. C. Kee, “The Transformation of the Synagogue After 70 CE: Its Import for Early Christianity,” *NTS* 36 (1990) 8.

²⁹ J. Gutmann, “Ancient Synagogues: Archaeological Fact and Scholarly Assumption,” *Bulletin of the Asia Institute* 9 (1997) 226–27.

³⁰ E. Netzer, “A Synagogue from the Hasmonean Period Recently Exposed in the Western Plain of Jericho,” *IEJ* 49 (1999) 203–21; the quotation is taken from p. 205.

³¹ Levine is also skeptical about the building in Jericho being a synagogue: “some of the interior elements found in this building—a triclinium in the main hall and the niche with its cupboard (which Netzer suggests might have held Torah scrolls)—would clearly constitute finds of revolutionary proportions.” Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue*, 69.

There are no other candidates for pre-70 CE synagogues. The gathering place recently uncovered at Khribet Cana, as we shall see, is most likely a synagogue. However, its date in the Roman period is not yet certain and probably it postdates 70 CE.

Two final words on the ancient synagogue are appropriate.³² It was certainly a revolutionary creation by Jews before 70 CE, attested by archaeological excavations, and citations in Josephus and the New Testament. That is, the synagogue (called a *proseuche* by Philo, and in places like Tiberias) was “the gathering place” for Jews to read the Torah, study, pray, and perhaps fast. Second, New Testament scholars should jettison the gratuitous assumption that women were separated from men in ancient synagogues; this phenomenon appears first in the Middle Ages.³³

Many, if not most, archaeologists now concur that the structures in Gamla, Masada, and the Herodium are pre-70 CE synagogues. Thus, there is evidence to support the gospel record that there were buildings identifiable as synagogues in which Jesus could have taught. Note in particular Mark’s summary: and Jesus “went throughout Galilee κηρύσσων εἰς τὰς συναγωγὰς” (Mk 1:39). The extant evidence discloses that pre-70 synagogues were rectangular rooms in larger buildings, as in the Herodium, or open public areas, such as at Masada and Gamla.

Two emphases need to be clarified at this point. First, the pre-70 CE synagogues are not similar to a basilica, a broadhouse, or an apsidal structure. They are diverse and often unimpressive. Second, typology cannot be aligned with chronology, as so many experts once claimed (e.g., Kohl, Watzinger, Sukenik, Avi-Yonah, and Goodenough). In the same area and at the same time we find a Galilean-type structure at Meiron and a broadhouse-type at Khirbet Shema.³⁴

The *sixth* most significant archaeological discovery concerned the walls and gates of Jerusalem. The northern wall that Jesus knew is most likely under or near the present Turkish wall near the Damascus Gate (but not farther west near the “New Gate”—this is part of the

³² For studies on the ancient synagogue, besides those noted, see the following: I. Levy, *The Synagogue: Its History and Function* (London: Vallentine, Mitchell, 1963); K. Hruby, *Die Synagoge: Geschichtliche Entwicklung einer Institution* (Zurich: Theologischer Verlag, 1971); W. Schrage, “συναγωγή (etc.)” in *TDNT* 7 (1971) 798–852. Also, see the major publications listed in Levine, “Bibliography,” *The Ancient Synagogue*, 615–84.

³³ See esp. Levine, “Synagogues,” *NEAEHL* 4.1423.

³⁴ See the excellent discussion by Levine in *The Ancient Synagogue*, 296–98.

“third wall”).³⁵ The northern wall, which may have never been completed before 70 CE,³⁶ may well be exposed now about 450 meters from the Turkish wall and north up Nablus Road. This wall [“the third wall”] was probably begun by Herod Agrippa I (37–44 CE) sometime between 41–44 CE (Josephus, *War* 5.152). Even if Jerusalem’s walls were, at the northern extent, identical to those of Old Jerusalem today, there probably were numerous people living beyond the northern walls. The population of Jerusalem, during Jesus’ time has been variously estimated: 25,000–35,000 (Jeremias and Wilkinson),³⁷ 40,000 (Broshi),³⁸ 90,000 (Avi-Yonah),³⁹ but certainly not 120,000 claimed by Josephus (*Against Apion* 1.22).

Southwest of Zion Gate and the Domitian Abbey are the remains of a Herodian Gate. It is visible beneath two later thresholds (the latest is Byzantine). More and more scholars are becoming convinced that this gate is the “Essene Gate” mentioned by Josephus (*War* 5.145; cf. 11QTemple 46.14). This gate has the most beautiful Herodian socket I have seen,⁴⁰ and the gate is now depicted on the model of Jerusalem at the Holy Land Hotel. Some scholars have speculated that Essenes lived in the southwestern section of Herodian Jerusalem and that Jesus’ followers also lived here after 30 CE; much of this speculation is not as romantic or fanciful as it initially might seem.⁴¹

Archaeologists have also found the remains of a wall to the east of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre; it was built sometime in the second half of the first century BCE. What is surprising is the dis-

³⁵ See D. Bahat, “Does the Holy Sepulchre Church Mark the Burial of Jesus?” in *Archaeology in the World of Herod, Jesus and Paul*, ed. H. Shanks and D. P. Cole (Washington, D.C.: Biblical Archaeology Society, 1990, 1992) 248–70; esp. the map on 257.

³⁶ So also, H. Geva in *NEAEHL* 2. 719.

³⁷ J. Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1969) 27, 83–84; J. Wilkinson, “Jerusalem: Its Water System and Population,” *PEQ* 106 (1974) 33–51.

³⁸ M. Broshi, “Estimating the Population of Ancient Jerusalem,” *BAR* 4 (1978) 10–15.

³⁹ M. Avi-Yonah, “Survey of the Density and Numbers of the Population in Ancient Eretz Isreal,” in *Essays and Studies in the Lore of the Holy Land* (Jerusalem: Neumann, 1964) 114–24 [in Hebrew].

⁴⁰ For a photograph, see Charlesworth, *The Millennium Guide* 149.

⁴¹ The most reliable discussion of an Essene community on Mt Zion, from the time of King Herod until the destruction in 70, is by B. Pixner; see his contribution in *Jesus and Archaeology*.

covery that the wall to the west of the Church is the “third wall” built by Agrippa between 41 and 44 CE.⁴² This wall reveals that Golgotha was outside of Jerusalem in 30 but not about ten years later. There seems to be a consensus among archaeologists that Jesus was possibly, even probably, crucified on the white stone visible inside and to the right of the entrance to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Jesus may well have been buried near this site, identified as Golgotha. As a distinguished archaeologist of Jerusalem, and a Jew, Dan Bahat states,

We may not be absolutely certain that the site of the Holy Sepulchre Church is the site of Jesus’ burial, but we certainly have no other site that can lay a claim nearly as weighty, and we really have no reason to reject the authenticity of the site.⁴³

The *fifth* major archaeological discovery concerns the Temple Mount. The seam in the eastern section of the Temple Mount reveals the extent to which Herod extended the Temple area.⁴⁴ A stone found *in situ* in the western wall, north of the “Wailing Wall” may be even heavier than reported. It could weigh as much as 600 tons; and that would make it close to the gigantic stone sticking out of the quarry at Baalbek.⁴⁵ Perhaps there is some history behind Mark 13:1: “And as he (Jesus) was coming out of the Temple, one of his disciples said to him, “Look, Teacher, what great (or wonderful) stones [ἰδε ποταποὶ λίθοι] and what great (or wonderful) buildings.”

Monumental and pre-70 CE structures are now visible south of the southern wall of the Temple. Jesus surely saw the double and triple Hulda Gates, the large esplanade, and the large *mikva’ot*. To the west foundations were found that proved Robinson’s Arch was not a corridor from the Upper City to the Temple, as with Wilson’s Arch. Robinson’s Arch is a support for a massive turning staircase. Near the Dung Gate large Herodian sewers and elegantly paved street have been recently exposed.⁴⁶

⁴² See the map in Bahat’s article in *Archaeology in the World of Herod, Jesus and Paul* 257.

⁴³ Bahat in *Archaeology in the World of Herod, Jesus and Paul* 260.

⁴⁴ For a photograph, see Charlesworth, *The Millennium Guide* 136.

⁴⁵ For a photograph, see W. Bell, *Rome in the East* (London, New York: Routledge, 2000) 46.

⁴⁶ See the photograph in Charlesworth, *The Millennium Guide* 142.

Was the *Hanuth*, the area for large sacrificial animals (Josephus *Ant.* 15.393, 411–17), moved from the Mount of Olives to the Temple only a few months before 30 CE (as Flusser claimed)? I have not been able to examine the corridor that allegedly leads from “Solomon’s Stables” to the large staircase inside the Hulda Gates. The political tension in this section of Jerusalem has been too tense and inhospitable to seek confirmations and permissions. Thus, the striking evidence that might give credence to John’s unique account remains presently unavailable (John 2:15, “and making a (kind of) whip from cords, he [Jesus] drove them all, with the sheep and oxen, out of the Temple”).

The *fourth* most significant archaeological discovery for Jesus Research was the Pool of Bethesda (or Bethzatha) described in John 5:2–9. New developments strengthen the earlier report. Shimon Gibson is working on the artifacts found in this area north of the Temple Mount. He and I examined a large clay vessel with many snakes on it. It was found in a cistern near Bethesda in the late nineteenth century by Clermont-Ganneau. The ophidian object, known as the Bethesda Vase, is preserved in the Palestinian Exploration Fund Archives in London. The vessel with ophidian images increases the possibility that a shrine to Asclepius, who is characteristically depicted with serpents, existed at Bethesda. While this vessel was not found *in situ* and thus cannot be dated stratigraphically, there is abundant evidence in the cisterns within Bethesda that this site was a place set aside for healing long before the Herodian Period and the time of Jesus. More historical credence seems to be given to Jesus’ statement in John 3:14 and also to the “story” in John 5:1–18.

The *third* most important archaeological insight referred to the Praetorium, the official residence of the Roman *praetor* (governor). Many experts now agree that this place for the *prefectus*, Pilate, was in the Upper City, and not in the Antonia Fortress (the Sisters of Zion today). The *lithostrôton* (John 19:13) denotes the public square in front of the Praetorium; it was paved with large stones. The Aramiac *Gabbatha* (John 19:13)⁴⁷ denotes the “high” place or the setting of the Praetorium that is probably the palace Herod κατὰ τὴν ἄνω δειμάμενος πόλιν (Josephus *War* 1.402). Due to the Roman sol-

⁴⁷ See J. F. Wilson, “Archaeology and the Origins of the Fourth Gospel: Gabbatha,” in *Johannine Studies: Essays in Honor of Frank Pack* (Malibu: Pepperdine University, 1989) 221–30.

diers desire to raze Jerusalem in 135–36 CE, all that remains of Herod's Palace is the massive Roman tower inside Jaffa Gate.

The *second* significant archaeological data for understanding the historical Jesus is the remains of a crucified man named Jehoúanan. The recent discussions have shifted to the observation that the marks on the wrists may not have been caused by nails. One now ponders how someone was crucified. If the arms were tied to the horizontal bar, then we also have an answer why the bones of only one crucified person have been found. Ropes do not leave discernible marks on bones.⁴⁸ The bones of Jehoúanan stimulate reflections on the various means of crucifying someone and how horrible the punishment was for the person crucified and for those related to him.

The *most* significant archaeological discovery related to Jesus Research is the growing evidence, and consensus, that Jesus was crucified on the rock now seen to the right inside the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.⁴⁹ Some experts think Jesus' crucifixion may have been near this spot but not on the actual rock. As mentioned earlier, a wall—most likely built by Herod Agrippa I—has been found east of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre; thus, in 30 CE but not in 44 CE the rock in the Church was outside the city walls.

Excavations in 1970's beneath the Armenian Chapel of St. Vartan revealed a boat with an inscription that has been interpreted in various contradictory ways.⁵⁰ Both should be interpreted together. The artist depicted a large Roman merchant ship (perhaps a *navis oneraria*).⁵¹ The main mast of the boat is depicted as either lowered, suggesting the vessel is in harbor, or broken or fallen, indicating that the vessel had been "wrecked in a storm."⁵² Thus, it seems best to

⁴⁸ I am grateful to Joe Zias for our discussions of the means of crucifixion over the years.

⁴⁹ The published research on excavations are voluminous. For the most recent, and authoritative, see V. Corbo, *Il Santo Sepolcro di Gerusalemme: Aspetti archeologici dalle origini al periodo crociato*, 3 vols. (Studium Biblicum Franciscanum 29; Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 1981–1982 [there is a 16-page summary in English by S. Loffreda])—see Benoit's review in *RB* (1984) 281–87; C. Couasnon, *The Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem*, trans. C. Ross (The Schweich Lectures; London: British Academy, 1974).

⁵⁰ I wish to express appreciation to Bishop Kapikian for taking me below the Armenian Chapel, showing me the drawing and inscription, and discussing its meaning with me.

⁵¹ I am indebted to Shimon Gibson for this information.

⁵² This is Broshi's interpretation. See his "Evidence of Earliest Christian Pilgrimage

take the verb to be in the first person plural perfect form. The inscription seems to be *domine ivimus*. If the inscription was made by Christian pilgrims, perhaps from Rome in which Latin was dominant, then it probably means “O Lord, we came [or have arrived].”⁵³ This is a likely scenario; and there is no reason to doubt that Jews poured into Jerusalem from many countries. For example, P. Borgen has shown that Philo (*Spec.* 1.69) provides evidence that pilgrims from the Diaspora came to Jerusalem for “every feast.”⁵⁴

The Latin also may mirror the first verse of Palm 122, the classical psalm of Christian pilgrims to Jerusalem. P. Benoit pointed out that the inscription seems to reflect the Latin of this psalm: *In domum domini ibimus*.⁵⁵ The meaning would then be “O Lord, we went,” citing Psalms 122’s “Let us go (or, we are going [לֵךְ]) to the house of the Lord.” It is conceivable that Christians from the West, probably Rome, made the sign of a boat, an early Christian symbol, and saluted their arrival in (or near) the place in which they most likely thought Jesus had been crucified and resurrected?

Shimon Gibson and J. E. Taylor, however, rightly point out possible flaws in this interpretation. They note that the language of Aelia Capitolina was Latin and that the drawing and inscription probably date from the second century CE. They suggest that perhaps some sailors from Caesarea Maritima, engaged in construction work in Jerusalem, proclaimed to their master that they went as instructed. They propose “master, we went.” Rather than push one interpretation, they conclude by reporting that the “precise meaning of the inscription and the identity of the artist remains a mystery.”⁵⁶

The focused search for *realia* that help situate Jesus in his time should be informed of diverse possibilities. It is clear that archaeologists have discovered pre-Constantinian structures, even remains of a Roman temple, beneath the present Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

to the Holy Land Comes to Light in Holy Sepulchre Church,” in *Archaeology in the World of Herod, Jesus and Paul* 267–70.

⁵³ See Geva in *NEAEHL* 2.780.

⁵⁴ P. Borgen, *Philo, John and Paul: New Perspectives on Judaism and Early Christianity* (Brown Judaic Studies 131; Atlanta: Scholars, 1987) 274.

⁵⁵ I am grateful to Benoit for conversations on these issues. See also, Broshi in *Archaeology in the World of Herod, Jesus and Paul* 268.

⁵⁶ Shimon Gibson, “The Jerusalem Ship Drawing,” in *Beneath the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem*, by Shimon Gibson and J. E. Taylor (London: Palestine Exploration Fund, 1994) 25–48. See esp. the numerous photographs of the boat and inscription.

Archaeological work alone cannot solve the puzzles left by the ancients. It still remains likely, but far from certain, that *domine iuimus* means “O Lord, we came” and was inscribed by a Christian. The setting and the symbolic meaning of a ship to denote Christianity indicate that perhaps Christians left this inscription.⁵⁷

The preceding pages review and update the seven most significant archaeological discoveries for Jesus Research, according to my *Jesus Within Judaism*, published in 1988. Do these seven remain as significant as I once thought? Should their order be altered? Perhaps, but any response would be rather subjective. The following discussion contains candidates for inclusion in such a list or additions to it. As I survey, in a very brief fashion, the additional most significant archaeological for Jesus Research I will strive, when possible, to move from west to east and north to south.

Ramat Hanadiv. Excavations at horvat ‘Aqav or Ramat Hannadiv have revealed ruins of a once impressive Herodian palace or fortified manor house, with well-dressed thresholds. The complex dates to the end of the first century BCE. The excavations are reported in Y. Hirschfield’s magnificent *Ramat Hanadiv Excavations*.⁵⁸ The ruins contain stables, two winepresses, an oil press, a tower (perhaps a *columbarium*), and a rock-cut, single person, Herodian mikva (locus 343). The site of the palace or manor was well chosen. It is nestled on the southern slopes of the Carmel hills and commands a pleasing view of the valley to the south and the coastal plain to the west. While the palace does not remind one of the sumptuousness of Hadrian’s Villa in ways that the palaces at Jericho and especially the Herodian complex might,⁵⁹ it nevertheless reveals the elegance of Herodian estates not far from Galilee. What seems strange is the absence of a large hall for greeting distinguished guests.⁶⁰ The palace or manor has a bathhouse with a caldarium and swimming pool;

⁵⁷ The date of the inscription cannot be discerned precisely.

⁵⁸ Y. Hirschfield, *Ramat Hanadiv Excavations: Final Report of the 1984–1988 Seasons* (Jerusalem: The Israel Exploration Society, 2000). The 768-page report contains the work of many archaeologists, and concludes with 16 color plates.

⁵⁹ The Herodian complex was immense; it covered 200 dunams. Contrast that figure with Herodian Jericho and its palaces; they covered 25 dunams. See E. Netzer, *et al.*, *Greater Herodium* (Qedem 13; Jerusalem: The Institute of Archaeology, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1981) 109.

⁶⁰ I am most grateful to Hirschfield for showing me the ruins and discussing the archaeology of the site with me.

the complex is called 'Ein Tzur. The weather at this site and the views are superb.

The Herodian palace or manor (called horvat 'Eleq) clearly dates from Herodian times, since the construction is Herodian with ash-lars in the fortified palatial building and swimming pool. The *realia* found *in situ* in the area are Herodian, including beautiful and often decorated oil lamps (one with a female figure and another with a griffin), and various pottery vessels, and three Herodian keys. The coins of horvat 'Aqav include five from the Roman period, including one of Festus. The 223 coins from horvat 'Eleq include coins of Herod the Great, Herod Archelaus, Agrippa I, numerous prefects or procurators (including Pilate and Festus), and Vespasian. In light of the growing importance of ophidian iconography, it is worthwhile reporting that a caduceus appears on the coins of Herod the Great, Archelaus, and Vespasian. Horvat 'Eleq was a thriving palace or manor that was built during the time of Herod the Great, who may have helped finance it so that it would enhance Caesarea Maritima not far away. This attractive complex was occupied until the First Jewish Revolt (66–70 CE), when it was abandoned.

The Herodian aqueduct is still covered in places, in ways reminiscent of some aqueducts within Khirbet Qumran. The ruins betray an agricultural palatial villa; that is, the wealth came from the surrounding fertile valleys.

Reflections on life here among the elite and the vistas of vineyards below in the southern valley help contextualize the Parable of the Wicked Tenant Farmers. It was during the time of the Herods that absentee landlords, who lived in palatial dwellings like this one, would have overtaxed many Jews and forced some to become tenant farmers. The presence of an unusual amount of cattle bones seems to indicate the wealth of this palace or manor. The owner may well have had a herd of cattle. The affluence of the palace is now confirmed by the recent recovery of an elegantly crafted lion, once part of a marble table that originally stood in the palace's garden.⁶¹

Nazareth. This city in which Jesus clearly spent his youth boasts evidence of veneration by Christians, but solid evidence of Jesus' time has been lacking so that tour buses often stopped merely to view the modern city and its churches from a distance. Now, exca-

⁶¹ Hirschfield kindly showed me this marble lion before it was published.

vations only a few hundred meters from the center of first-century Nazareth have revealed some challenging structures. A winepress has been exposed and beautifully constructed stone walled terraces are now visible. Most importantly, three circular stone towers only about twenty meters apart now rise majestically above the rocky terrain. These cannot be fortifications; they are related to the vineyard. Working with Ross Voss, I cleared the eastern tower. The shards I collected from its base were all Roman; most of them were Herodian.⁶²

These archaeological discoveries raise many questions that presently remain unanswerable. Were Joseph and his son Jesus “builders” (cf. Mark 6:3)? Did they know how to build terrace walls? Could they have built the terrace walls and towers now exposed in Nazareth? Could they be some of the builders of the winepress? Regardless of speculative responses to such possibilities, we now have evidence from Nazareth of vineyards with towers, which had seemed odd or misconceived by the compiler of Jesus’ Parable of the Vineyard and the Tenants.

A man planted a vineyard (ἀμπελῶνα) and he encircled it with a stone-hedge (φραγμόν), and he dug a winepress (ὕπολῆνιον). Then he constructed a tower (πύργον). Finally, he leased it to farmers (γεωργοῖς), and went away. (Mk 12:1)

The absent landlord and overtaxed tenant workers of a vineyard are easy to imagine in light of the sumptuous palace or manor house uncovered not too far to the southwest of Nazareth at Ramat Hanadiv. Perhaps, the new discoveries of an Herodian vineyard with walls, a winepress, and a tower just to the west of first-century Nazareth should be considered among the most important archaeological discoveries for Jesus Research.

Cana. Numerous sites are shown to tourists as the Cana in which Jesus performed the miracle described in John 2:1–11. In Galilee there are two major competing sites. In southern Lebanon, just southeast of Tyre, there is a “Cana” that some claim to be the authentic site for Jesus’ miracle. Both Eusebius and Jerome support that site, and the Lebanese point to vestiges of Christian saints carved on the “Khashna” rocks not far from Kâna el Jalil.⁶³

⁶² For a photograph and further discussion, see Charlesworth, *The Millennium Guide* 188–91.

⁶³ The publication is too popular and geared to lure tourists to warrant scholarly evaluation. See Y. El Hourani, *Cana of Galilee in South Lebanon* ([Beirut]: Ministry

Now, after three seasons of excavating, Peter Richardson and Douglas Edwards claim that they have located the Cana of Josephus (Josephus *Life* 86) and of the New Testament (John 2:1–11, 4:46, 21:2).⁶⁴ It is Khirbet Cana. Since the sixth century CE it also has been venerated as the Cana of the Gospel of John. It sits on a hill on the north side of the Beth Netofa Valley at the Wadi Yodefah, and in sight of Nazareth. The village peaked during the Early Roman and Byzantine Period. It was without walls in the Roman Period. The archaeologists discovered two pre-70 CE *columbaria*, glass wasters from a glass-blowing factory, and large olive oil presses. The first-century CE houses at Khirbet Cana are reminiscent of those at Capernaum and Yodefah.

Evidence of pre-70 Jewish habitation at Khirbet Cana are stoneware that is both turned on a lathe and handmade, a *mikva*, and nearly 100 *loculi* of twelve or thirteen first-century tombs. The monumental features of rooms in the southwest parts of a trapezoidal wall from the seventh-century CE are from the Early Roman Period. Rooms that are adjacent and with benches suggest to the archaeologists that they have found either a public building or more likely a synagogue. A capital with grape clusters such as those found at Gamla enhance this latter suggestion. It is unlikely that the so-called synagogue dates to the time of Jesus, and probably dates to the late second or third century CE.

Bethsaida. Bethsaida looms large in the Galilee of Jesus. It is perhaps the home of James and John, the sons of Zebedee, and most likely the early home of Philip, Peter, and Andrew (John 1:44, 12:21). The present site identified as Bethsaida has been challenged, because an insufficient amount of first-century pottery and coins have been recovered, and because Bethsaida, which means “house of the fishermen,” is about one and half miles north of the Sea of Galilee and over 200 yards from the Jordan River.⁶⁵ Rami Arav and those who are convinced they are excavating Bethsaida at et-Tel, the site proposed in 1838 by E. Robinson, respond that a sufficient amount

of Tourism, 1995). See rather, R. Dussaud, *Topographie historique de la Syrie antique et médiévale* (Paris, Paul Geuthner, 1927) 10.

⁶⁴ See their contribution to *Jesus and Archaeology*, in press.

⁶⁵ See esp. M. Nun, “Has Bethsaida Finally Been Found?” *Jerusalem Perspective* (July–August 1999). Also, see the reply to him by the Bethsaida Excavations Project in “The Case for el-Araj,” *BAR* 26 (2000) 52.

of first-century ware has been found, and that the Jordan river shifted course after Jesus' time, cutting Bethsaida off from the present shoreline.⁶⁶

The houses in Bethsaida were more solidly built than the dwellings in Capernaum.⁶⁷ The walls are often two feet thick. Within one house (the "Fisherman's House") there is a large courtyard that is paved with basalt stones.⁶⁸ It seems that those who lived in Bethsaida were more affluent than those in Capernaum.

In one house the excavators found fishing net weights, anchors, needles, and fishhooks. The house was thus called "the Fishermen's House." One fishhook had not yet been bent, indicating that fishhooks were probably manufactured in or near this place. An underground room with basalt slabs for a roof and within which four large wine jars were unearthed has been labeled "the Wine Maker House." Herodian coins, coins of the Prefect Gratus, a coin of Pontius Pilate from 29 CE, and coins of Philip dating to 30 attest to occupation near or during the time of Jesus.⁶⁹ Stone vessels suggest that some of the houses belonged to Jews. Arav contends that he may have discovered a temple built in honor of Julia-Livia, wife of the Emperor Augustus and mother of the Emperor Tiberius. Near what is judged to be the adyton were found buried *instrumenta sacra*, including two bronze incense shovels.⁷⁰

In 30 CE Bethsaida was elevated to a polis and renamed Julia to honor the wife of Augustus and the mother of Tiberias. Josephus, after 70, calls the place both Bethsaida and Julia. The Evangelists use traditions that always cite the village as Bethsaida and never Julia. Mark calls it a "village" (κώμη; 8:23) and Luke a "city" (πόλις; 9:12). What do these facts reveal to us about the reliability of these gospel traditions?

Caesarea Maritima. The Evangelists do not report that Jesus was in Caesarea Maritima, but the massive and major port built by Herod

⁶⁶ See esp. R. Arav, R. A. Freund and J. F. Shroder, "Bethsaida Rediscovered: Long-Lost City Found North of Galilee Shore," BAR 26 (2000) 45–56; see the two drawings clarifying the relation of Bethsaida to the Sea of Galilee today and 2,000 years ago (on p. 46).

⁶⁷ I have examined the houses on numerous visits to Bethsaida.

⁶⁸ See the photograph in *The Millennium Guide* 54.

⁶⁹ See the drawings in F. Strickert, *Bethsaida: Home of the Apostles* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1998) 80, 81, 85, 96, 97, 98, 100, 101, and 146.

⁷⁰ See Arav's contribution in *Jesus and Archaeology*, in press. For a photograph of the incense shovel, see Strickert, *Bethsaida* 105.

the Great should not go unmentioned in Jesus Research.⁷¹ It helps us contemplate how much ancient Palestine, in Jesus' time, was open to the flow of goods from all over the civilized world. Jews must have enjoyed chariot races. Two of the most impressive hippodromes are now exposed in Caesarea. A 100-ton red granite obelisk, discovered in the east hippodrome, has been re-erected in the center of the racetrack on its original base and on a wall that divides the hippodrome. The obelisk originally stood 15 meters high but is now only 12 meters long.

Jerusalem. There is much being discovered now that should be considered among the most important archaeological discoveries for Jesus Research. The comments, of course, must continue to be very selective. Excavators working to the south and west of the Temple Mount have exposed first-century streets, well crafted sewers, shops, and former entrances into the Temple that clearly antedate Jesus.⁷² Seats that conceivably are from the Jerusalem theater mentioned by Josephus (*Ant.* 15.268–70) may have been discovered.⁷³ A large cave, dug out of limestone, east of Jerusalem and north of Bethpage has been discovered; it was the site of a factory that produced both lathe-turned stone vessels and hand-chiseled stone vessels. The factory antedates 70 CE.⁷⁴ An extensive quantity of exquisitely made Herodian glass, with stunning detail and color, some with a menorah,⁷⁵ have appeared

⁷¹ See an artist's rendering of Caesarea Maritima during the time of Jesus, and the popular, but scholarly, discussions in *King Herod's Dream*, ed. K. G. Holum and R. L. Hohlfelder (with contributions by leading experts who have excavated at Caesarea) (New York, London: W. W. Norton & Co., 1988) 99. For more scholarly work, see Levine and Netzer, eds., *Excavations at Caesarea Maritima: 1975, 1976, 1979—Final Report* (Qedem 21; Jerusalem: The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1986). For the western hippodrome, see p. 9. For photographs of the eastern hippodrome and a discussion see Levine, "Sports Arenas," *Roman Caesarea: An Archaeological-Topographical Study* (Qedem 2; Jerusalem: The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1975) 27–29, plate 5 (the obelisk can be seen *in situ* on photograph 3). The western hippodrome was not found until later in the excavations; for a color photograph, see Charlesworth, *The Millennium Guide*, color section following p. 40.

⁷² For the most recent report, see R. Reich and Y. Billig, "Excavations Near the Temple Mount and Robinson's Arch, 1994–1996," *Ancient Jerusalem Revealed* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2000) 340–50.

⁷³ Reich and Billig, "Appendix: A Group of Theater Seats from Jerusalem," *Ancient Jerusalem Revealed* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2000) 350–52.

⁷⁴ See D. Amit, J. Seligman, and I. Zilberbod, "Stone Vessel Workshops of the Second Temple Period East of Jerusalem," *Ancient Jerusalem Revealed*, 353–58. Also, see S. Shimon Gibson, "The Stone Vessel Industry at Hizma," *IEJ* 33 (1983) 176–88.

⁷⁵ See Charlesworth, *The Millennium Guide*, the color section following p. 40.

in Jerusalem; most of them come from the north and some from Hizma.

Shimon Gibson is presently excavating an area to the east of Zion Gate and just outside the present Turkish Walls. He has reached the Herodian layer and what he is discovering will help us better estimate the place of Caiaphas' house. From earlier excavations in this part of Jerusalem, but more to the west, he has much to publish—especially a Roman sword still in its scabbard.⁷⁶ S. Gibson and D. M. Jacobson's sourcebook on the subterranean chambers of the Temple Mount, especially the area inside the triple gates of the Herodian Temple, is replete with valuable information.⁷⁷

The Galilean Boat. Finally, some mention should be made about a boat found in the mud of the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee.⁷⁸ It was found by two brothers near Kibbutz Ginosar. Unfortunately, it has sometimes been called "the Jesus Boat." That is misleading; there is no connection between this boat either with Jesus or with any of his early followers.

Yet, the boat may help us in Jesus Research. It helps us imagine boating and fishing on the Sea of Galilee during Jesus' time.⁷⁹ The boat was made in the first century BCE and used up until sometime around 70 CE. It is poorly crafted and represents the possession of ordinary people. Perhaps about 13 men could be crowded into the boat; but they could not move about as would be necessary for casting nets. Perhaps the most important feature of the wooden boat is its shallow draft. It was low to the water. Thus fishermen could easily pull nets full of fish into it; but it would quickly fill with water when the waves whipped up from a storm. The latter is so well known from the gospels that it needs no elaboration.

The Herodium. The burial site of King Herod has not yet been located. No one has even found a trace of it. Josephus describes in detail where Herod was buried (*War* 1.667–73). It is the Herodium.

⁷⁶ I am most grateful to S. Gibson for sharing with me his insights and discoveries.

⁷⁷ S. Gibson and D. M. Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem* (British Archaeological Reports International Series 637; Oxford: Tempus Reparatum, 1996).

⁷⁸ I wish to express appreciation to the Israel Department of Antiquities and Museums for the permission to examine and study the boat shortly after it had been discovered. For a discussion and photograph, see Charlesworth, *The Millennium Guide* 165.

⁷⁹ See S. Wachsmann, "The Galilee Boat," in *Archaeology in the World of Herod, Jesus and Paul* 209–23.

E. Netzer, who excavated the Herodium,⁸⁰ is convinced that Herod was not buried in the elevated hill (the Upper Herodium) but below it (the Lower Herodium).⁸¹ His main arguments are that no one would live within a circumscribed area in which a body was buried, and the recovery of elegant Herodian ashlar that were part of a Doric frieze, in one corner of the Monumental Building that once dominated the Lower Herodium.⁸² A. Lichtenberger presented the same arguments, concluding that the Upper Herodium, most likely, cannot at the same time be a palace and a tomb.⁸³ More recently J. Magness has stressed that an examination of S. Loffreda's *La ceramica di Macheronte e dell'Herodium (90 a.C.–135 d.C.)*⁸⁴ reveals that from the time of Herod's death until the First Jewish Revolt fine ware types are found in the Lower Herodium but not in the Upper Herodium. That discovery seems to suggest that the Upper Herodium ceased to be a palace after Herod's death.⁸⁵

How solid is Magness' conclusion? She herself admits that there is some evidence that might disprove her assumption. Loffreda did report the discovery in the Upper Herodium of the base of a carinated shallow cup or small plate, and it seems to postdate Herod's death (Loffreda, fig. 57.156). Also, since the Upper Herodium was used during the First and Second Revolts and later by Byzantine monks, one should ask about the subsequent removal of what might have been evidence of occupation from 4 BCE to 66 CE. Thus, we are left with questions regarding the location of Herod's tomb.

3. *Three Problematic Points in Scholarly Discussions*

Three debates of interest to those engaged in Jesus Research are frequently found in archaeological reports and summaries. Each will be introduced in order of importance.

⁸⁰ See esp. E. Netzer, "Herodium," *NEAEHL* 2.618–26.

⁸¹ E. Netzer, *Greater Herodium* (Qedem 13; Jerusalem: Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1981) p. 43; and *idem*, *Die Paläst der Hasmonäer und Herodes' des Grossen* (Mainz am Rhein: Von Zabern, 1999) 106–07.

⁸² Netzer, "Searching for Herod's Tomb," in *Archaeology in the World of Herod, Jesus and Paul* 137–58, esp. 157.

⁸³ A. Lichtenberger, *Die Baupolitik Herodes des Grossen* (Abhandlungen des Deutschen Palästinaverains 26; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1999) 111.

⁸⁴ S. Loffreda, *La ceramica di Macheronte e dell'Herodium (90 a.C.–135 d.C.)* (Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, Coll. Maior 39; Jerusalem: Franciscanum, 1996).

⁸⁵ J. Magness, "Where is Herod's Tomb at Herodium," *BASOR* 322 (2001) 43–46.

Peter's house. Has Peter's house been found in Capernaum? This was the claim of V. Corbo and S. Loffreda, two Franciscan Fathers, who excavated Capernaum from 1968 to 1985.⁸⁶ Some of their reading of the graffiti seems tendentious to some experts.⁸⁷ Reed gives some credence to these criticisms and opines that "the validity of Peter's house under the basilica" is "of marginal concern to the nature and character of Capernaum at the time of Jesus."⁸⁸ If so, it is not insignificant for Jesus Research.

In favor of the site being the house of Peter are the following observations: (1) Peter clearly comes from and lived in Capernaum. (2) This is the only house in this area of Galilee that has been identified either by archaeologists, pilgrims, or tradition as Peter's house. (3) An octagonal basilica was placed over sacred sites in the Holy Land; such a basilica was placed over this house and it was celebrated as Peter's house. (4) Public rooms used for special purposes were plastered; the central room in this house was so plastered—and probably already in the first century CE. (5) Graffiti left by Christians in the second century CE, and perhaps earlier, were discovered on the plaster. One of them might have the name "Peter."⁸⁹ (6) The basalt walls of this house would have supported only a roof that was probably thatched—precisely as Peter's house is described (Mark 2:1–12).⁹⁰

Archaeological evidence is almost always hotly debated. What is clear? It is certain that the "house-church" in Capernaum that is celebrated as Peter's house may well be the house in which Jesus

⁸⁶ V. Corbo, *Cafarnao I* (Studium Biblicum Franciscanum 19; Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 1974); S. Loffreda, *Cafarnao II* (Studium Biblicum Franciscanum 19; Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 1974); A. Spijkerman, *Cafarnao III* (Studium Biblicum Franciscanum 19; Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 1975). E. Tesa, *Cafarnao IV* (Studium Biblicum Franciscanum 19; Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 1972).

⁸⁷ See J. Taylor, *Christians and the Holy Places: The Myth of Jewish-Christian Origins* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993) 284–88.

⁸⁸ Reed, *Archaeology and the Galilean Jesus* 143.

⁸⁹ See the excellent reproduction and discussion in J. F. Strange and H. Shanks, "Has the House Where Jesus Stayed in Capernaum Been Found?" in *Archaeology in the World of Herod, Jesus and Paul* 188–99, esp. 199. As Strange and Shanks contend, "... a considerable amount of circumstantial evidence does point to its identification as St. Peter's house" (199).

⁹⁰ Other evidence may also point to Peter; for example, it may not be insignificant that fishing hooks were found in the house and that Peter was a fisherman and not a farmer (ample evidence for preparation of olive oil and wine are also seen at Capernaum).

taught; but it was not a synagogue. Thus, I fully agree with J. Murphy-O'Connor, who is unusually well informed of data related to Jesus and archaeology and astutely critical:

The most reasonable assumption is the one attested by the Byzantine pilgrims, namely, that it was the house of Peter in which Jesus may have lodged (Matt 5:20). Certainly, nothing in the excavations contradicts this identification.⁹¹

Theodotus inscription. Does the Theodotus inscription, on display in the Rockefeller Museum in Jerusalem, postdate 70 CE? This inscription (Inv. S842 and *CIJ* II 14040), now seems, in the judgment of most experts, to be evidence of a pre-70 synagogue in Jerusalem. Three points seem fundamental.⁹²

First, the claim by many—including Reed—that συναγωγή before 70 CE denotes only a “gathering” never a building, is false. An inscription from Benghazi (Bernike, Cyrenaica) refers to “the renovation of the synagogue” (εἰς ἐπισκευὴν τῆς συναγωγῆς). Obviously, a building is denoted. The script dates from the time of Nero (55/56 CE).

Second, the palaeography of the Theodotos inscription antedates 70 CE. It is a lapidary script that is similar to the Herodian script found in the Qumran caves.

Third, the stratigraphy of the site in which the Theodotos inscription was recovered is Herodian. There is no reason to suggest a post-Herodian date for the object and its inscription.

Cumulatively, it becomes clear that a synagogue in Jerusalem, funded by Theodotos, was constructed in the late first century BCE or early first century CE. Moreover, Theodotos’ grandfather is also identified as an ἀρχισυνάγωγος. Hence, it would be unwise to think about a “synagogue” that antedated 70 by only a decade.

Date of the Sepphoris Theater. The storm center of debate in archaeology and Jesus Research concerns the date of the impressive theater in Sepphoris. What is the date of this theater that could seat 4,500? Does it date from Jesus’ time? Did he and his father walk the four miles from Nazareth to Sepphoris to work there as builders? Did Jesus learn about “hypocrites,” because of “actors” performing

⁹¹ J. Murphy-O'Connor, *The Holy Land* (4th ed.; Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1998) 220.

⁹² I wish to express indebtedness and appreciation to J. S. Kloppenborg Verbin for information and discussion. See his contribution in *Jesus and Archaeology*, in press.

in the theater? Some scholars have answered these questions affirmatively; others have been critical of such assertions.

If the Sepphoris theater dates to Jesus' youth, then it should be considered one of the major archaeological discoveries for Jesus Research. Reed dates the theater to the late first century CE. He rejects an earlier dating, because of the requisite stratification and dating of pottery shards are only announced and not defended (96, 108). If Reed is correct, then the theater cannot have been where Joseph or Jesus may have worked as a *tektōn*, and it could not have influenced Jesus.

Does the theater date from the time of Jesus, and does it help us understand some of his sayings? Three main names seem to dominate in this debate. W. Bauer, in 1927, claimed that Sepphoris, like other cities in Galilee like Chorazin, Bethsaida, Tiberias, represented gentile culture. He surmised that Jesus probably avoided this Hellenistic city because his message was discordant from the religion of those in Sepphoris.⁹³ Bauer contended that Jesus "wirklich niemals in Sepphoris gepredigt und geheilt."⁹⁴ S. J. Case, probably the pioneer in the sociological study of Jesus and the scholar who stimulated Waterman's excavations at Sepphoris in 1926,⁹⁵ raised the question whether Jesus could have been involved as a *tektōn* in Antipas' grand rebuilding of Sepphoris, which (according to him) continued to 25 CE. R. Batey, in 1991, answered this question positively in his popular *Jesus and the Forgotten City*.⁹⁶

The criterion for discerning the correct answer to Jesus' possible involvement in the building of the theater at Sepphoris is appreciably distinct from dating a manuscript. The latest orthographic form reveals the date of a manuscript. The earliest clear evidence of a theater's construction dates its beginning, and should not be confused with possible later expansions or renovations.

For Jesus Research a date before 30 CE is imperative for Jesus, but a later date may be significant if a gospel tradition is shaped by the sociology of language from this theater at Sepphoris. On the

⁹³ W. Bauer, "Jesus der Galiläer," in *Aufsätze und kleine Schriften*, ed. G. Stecker (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1967) 91–108.

⁹⁴ Bauer, "Jesus der Galiläer," 106.

⁹⁵ S. J. Case, "Jesus and Sepphoris," *JBL* 45 (1926) 14–22. For astute reflections on Bauer, Case, and Batey, see Reed, *Archaeology and the Galilean Jesus* 104–14.

⁹⁶ R. Batey, *Jesus and the Forgotten City* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker, 1991).

negative side for the study of the historical Jesus, if “hypocrites” is a post-Jesus redactional addition by Matthew, then it will derive from Matthew’s sociological setting and theology and, if shaped by the theater, will most likely derive from theaters far removed from Sepphoris.

With these methodological clarifications, we can examine the evaluation of the archaeological evidence. The major protagonists in the debate are the leading excavators of Sepphoris. Eric and Carol Meyers opt for a second century CE date for the Roman theater. They report that the “theater, parts of which have been excavated by four expeditions, seems to date to a period later than Antipas.”⁹⁷ They suggest that it was constructed “as late as the early to mid-second century, when the city underwent extensive rebuilding after the First Jewish Revolt” (*OEANE* 4.533).

This judgment is contradicted in the *OEANE* of which E. M. Meyers is “Editor in Chief.” In the entry on “Theaters,” According to A. Segal (*OEANE* 5.201):

Three theaters were erected in Herod the Great’s kingdom (37–4 BCE); at Caesarea, in Jerusalem, and in Jericho. A fourth was presumably initiated by his son Antipas at Sepphoris.

This same opinion is offered by Z. Weiss, who with E. Netzer directed the Hebrew University excavations at Sepphoris until 1995 when he became sole director. In *NEAEHL* Weiss reports that the Sepphoris “theater apparently was built in the early first century CE, possibly in the reign of Antipas (4 BCE to 39 CE), as part of his building activity at Sepphoris at the beginning of his rule in Galilee” (4.1325). Another director of excavations at Sepphoris, J. Strange, also dates the theater to the time of Antipas.⁹⁸ He claims to have found archaeological evidence that the theater was first constructed during the time of Antipas; that is, it was there during the time Jesus was nearby—either in Nazareth or in Capernaum.⁹⁹

Which archaeologists should we follow? The argument cannot be settled by studying Josephus or the New Testament. What is demanded is proof that the Sepphoris theater is datable archaeologically; that

⁹⁷ C. L. Meyers and E. M. Meyers, *OEANE* 4.530.

⁹⁸ Strange, “Sepphoris,” *ABD* 5.1091.

⁹⁹ I am grateful to Strange for conversations on the dating of the theater at Sepphoris.

is, a dating that is based on the discovery of some datable stratigraphic factor—something like a coin or a shard. We need to see proof of an *ad quem* or even *post quem*; we need something similar to the one found by Benoit to prove that the traditional site of Jesus' imprisonment, with a Roman game chiseled on the floor, is impossible because a structure *in situ* dates the floor to the time of Hadrian's building of Aelia Capitolina around 130 CE.¹⁰⁰

In November, 2001, I was able to discuss this issue with both James Strange and Eric Meyers. Strange has no doubt that this proof has been found and that the theater originally dates from the time of Antipas.¹⁰¹ He is digging on the northern or lower area of Sepphoris. He reports that the date of the theater in his area is the first half of the first century CE; the date is suggested by the dating of pottery shards found under the stage, rear wall, and perimeter of outer wall. The theater was renovated sometime later, perhaps between 70 and 80 CE.¹⁰² Batey opines that the theater was constructed in the early years of Antipas' reign, and that the construction began in 3 BCE.¹⁰³

Meyers is adamant; the final date of the Sepphoris theater is clearly post-70 CE, and probably dates to sometime around 100 CE.¹⁰⁴ This conclusion is also defended by M. Chancey, who points out that it is not clear that the Sepphoris theater "ever existed at the time of Jesus."¹⁰⁵ The date for the upper level does seem to be the early second century CE, because of datable pottery at that point.¹⁰⁶ Weiss and

¹⁰⁰ During the millennium celebration in Jerusalem, two scholars presented such proofs for dating the Sepphoris theater. These studies will be published in *Jesus and Archaeology* (forthcoming).

¹⁰¹ I am indebted to Strange for conversations on this point, many during visits to Sepphoris, and in November 2001.

¹⁰² See also Strange, "Six Campaigns at Sepphoris," in *The Galilee in Late Antiquity*, ed. L. I. Levine (New York, Jerusalem: Jewish Theological Society of America, 1992) 342–43.

¹⁰³ Batey, "Sepphoris and the Jesus Movement," *NTS* 47 (2001) 402–409.

¹⁰⁴ I am indebted to Eric Meyers for insights and information supplied on November 10, 2001. Also, see Meyers and M. Chancey, "How Jewish was Sepphoris in Jesus' Time?" *BAR* 26 (2000) 18–33.

¹⁰⁵ M. Chancey, "The Cultural Milieu of Ancient Sepphoris," *NTS* 47 (2001) 127–45; the quotation is on p. 136. Also, see Chancey, "The Myth of a Gentile Galilee: The Population of Galilee and New Testament Studies" (Duke Ph.D., 1999)—to be published in *NTSMS*. Chancey is a student of Eric Meyers.

¹⁰⁶ It is clear that the theater was not used in the Byzantine period; it was destroyed in the earthquake of 363 CE.

Netzer have changed their minds; they now conclude that the date of the Sepphoris theater is the late first century CE, at the earliest.¹⁰⁷

How can these two conflicting discoveries and informed judgments be reconciled? Perhaps the theater was constructed in two different stages and periods. If the reading of the pottery finally solves this debate,¹⁰⁸ it is conceivable that the upper level was an expansion of an earlier theater from the time of Herod Antipas (4 BCE to 39 CE). Hence, that Jesus and his contemporaries might have known a smaller theater.

If this proof can be supplied and accepted as scientific evidence that an early theater dates from Jesus' youth, then we may turn again to Josephus and the New Testament records. According to Josephus, Antipas' building projects made Sepphoris "the ornament of all Galilee" (*Ant.* 18.27). What does "ornament of all Galilee" (πρόσχημα τοῦ Γαλιλαίου) mean? According to E. and C. Meyers, πρόσχημα denotes an impregnable fortification (*OEAANE* 4.530). The context in Josephus might suggest this interpretation; it refers to Antipas fortifying (τειχίσας) Sepphoris.

Antipas, however, also made Sepphoris an imperial city, and not just a fortress. He honored Augustus by calling Sepphoris "Autocratoris" (Αὐτοκρατορίδα). The Greek verb τειχίζω denotes building a wall (τείχος) and may be irrelevant for contemplating the construction of a theater. The noun, "Autocratoris," denotes a royal city, and not just a walled city. The key term is πρόσχημα, which means generically anything "that is held before." Its primary meaning is "appearance"; its derived meaning is "ornament." The noun πρόσχημα is chosen by Polybius to describe the new city of Carthage; it was "the chief ornament and capital (πρόσχημα καὶ βασιλείον) of the Carthaginian empire" (*Hist.* 3.15.3).¹⁰⁹ Thus "capital" and "ornament" seem also to describe Antipas' "Sepphoris."¹¹⁰ If archaeological proof can be

¹⁰⁷ Weiss and Netzer, "Hellenistic and Roman Sepphoris," in M. Nagy, *et al.*, eds., in *Sepphoris in Galilee* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1996) 32, 122.

¹⁰⁸ As of November 2001 the pottery had not yet been scrutinized and dated. I am grateful to Eric Meyers for showing me the Sepphoris pottery in the basement of the Albright Institute.

¹⁰⁹ The text and translation is by W. R. Paton, *Polybius* (LCL; Cambridge: Harvard University, 1979) 2.36–37.

¹¹⁰ Antipas was married to Herodias whose daughter was Salome. She married Philip and when he died she married Aristobulus, the son of Herod King of Chalcis, who along with Agrippa I was the grandson of Herod the Great. We New Testament

forthcoming for Antipas constructing a theater at Sepphoris during Jesus' youth, then that would fit nicely with it being the "ornament of all Galilee."

The date of the theater does not settle the possible influence of Sepphoris on Jesus, especially during his youth. The presence of sophisticated *mikva'ot* at Sepphoris indicate that there were priests, who intermittently served in the Temple, probably living there, as evidenced by the ancient literature (*mYoma* 6:3; *jBer.* 3:6b; *tTa'an.* 1 end; *jYoma* 6:43c; *jMa'as.* S 5:56a). Is it possible that Jesus' love for the Temple and Jerusalem may have been enhanced by conversations with priests in Sepphoris? These issues cannot be settled by archaeologists. In fact, virtually no conceivable discovery can supply answers to most of the questions that stimulate, and often plague, New Testament scholars. We historians too often wander in the opaqueness of recorded history.

4. *The Fundamental Importance of Archaeology in Jesus Research*

The archaeological evidence available for reconstructing Jesus' time is impressive. Now, we know that Galilee was not defined by rural villages; at least Sepphoris and Tiberius were cities. Gamla was more like a city than a village. We are seeing, in some publications in Jesus Research, not only the importance of archaeology, but also of sociology and iconography.

In the past decade, or more, serious scholars have argued that New Testament research has become too text-centered, yet some studies have become even more myopic, devolving into self-centered rhetorical studies. The Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas and the Society of Biblical Literature have seminars that tend to lead in opposite directions. Rhetorical studies of New Testament texts are exceedingly important, if they are informed about ancient rhetoric,¹¹¹ but this is not always the case. It is alarming to observe that while historical, sociological, and archaeological methodologies and insights

scholars too often forget about the extent of the Herodian dynasty that plagued Jesus and his followers. D. Flusser wisely warned against assuming Salome "was a morally depraved person" (p. 21). See Flusser, "A New Portrait of Salome," *Jerusalem Perspective* 55 (1998) 18–21.

¹¹¹ See the masterful studies by C. C. Black in *The Rhetoric of the Gospel* (St. Louis: Chalice, 2001).

are judged to be fundamental for New Testament studies, especially Jesus Research, some experts are still oblivious of such scientific foundations for research.

Jesus Research is paradigmatically different from the New Quest and even the Old Quest of Heinrich Holzmann, Adolf Harnack, and Albert Schweitzer. Whereas they relied on source-criticism and sought to ground the study of Jesus in the putative earliest sources, Mark and Q, more recent scholars see the danger of a text-centered approach, and utilize sociology and archaeology

If Jesus Research is to move forward with the attempt to reconstruct Jesus time and his place within it, then archaeological discoveries and insights are essential. The New Testament documents from which we reconstruct what Jesus said and did, and why he did so, obtain clearer meaning when examined within the settings in which he lived. Clearly these texts need contexts—otherwise they can mean virtually anything a modern reader might suggest, or worse: nothing at all.

During his adult ministry, Jesus may have avoided Sepphoris because of his own Jewishness, as J. P. Meier and E. P. Sanders suggest. He may also have shunned the city for political reasons; that is, to avoid Antipas (Luke 13:31–33). Most likely Jesus knew this Herodian had killed John the Baptizer (probably Jesus' teacher and possible relative, as we know from our exegesis of John and Luke). He may not have wished to avoid the Jews who were Hellenized in Sepphoris, but he may have judged that city not a suitable social setting for his revolutionary insights.

Did Jesus choose Capernaum, a modest fishing village without evidence of conservative Judaism, and avoid Gamla, a conservatively religious Jewish city, because his Jewishness was "too liberal" for former Babylonian Jews? Such new questions are raised by a study of Galilean archaeology, since first-century Jews in Capernaum apparently had no *mikva'ot*, while Jews in Gamla frequented an impressive synagogue and *mikva'ot*.

There should be no doubt—in light of archaeological research and especially the recovery of the Qumran Scrolls and the renewed study of the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha—that Jesus was an apocalyptic and eschatological prophet.¹¹² He sought to reform Judaism

¹¹² G. Theissen and A. Merz, in their superb and comprehensive guide to Jesus Research, incorrectly assume that J. D. Crossan and M. J. Borg represent a con-

employing intermittently some anti-Judaean sentiments and developing select pro-Israelite traditions.¹¹³ As evidenced by the research and insights provided by Meyers, Strange, and Bowersock, it is clear that Hellenism was not necessarily antithetical or antagonistic to Judaism. Hellenism and Judaism mixed in various ways at different times and places, depending on economic, social, and religious factors and emotions.

There is no consensus that can be reported on some of the major issues for discussion in the new field of Jesus and archaeology. On the one hand, do we agree with Strange and Batey, imagining that Jesus' life and message was shaped by urbanized Galilee? Or, on the other hand, do we side with Horsely and attempt to reconstruct the historical Jesus in light of rural Galilee? Or, further, are we being forced to choose between false alternatives, since the data is too complex to close out either option (as I have become persuaded)?

What was the relation between the new urban centers, like Sepphoris and Tiberias, and the older villages? Do we side with Edwards and see a network of interaction and deny any parasitic function to the cities, or do we side with Freyne and see social and economic tensions caused by the heterogenetic cities Sepphoris and Tiberias and contemplate exploitation?¹¹⁴ Perhaps, both factors can be perceived, intermittently, in the life and teaching of Jesus.

The land of Jesus is no longer a *terra incognita*.¹¹⁵ Archaeological

sensus of Jesus specialists in the United States; they report that in "most recent North American exegesis, future eschatology is denied" (p. 245). E. P. Sanders, P. Fredriksen, B. Chilton, J. P. Meier, I, and others have no doubt that Jesus' teaching was shaped by Jewish eschatology. Perhaps most of those involved in Jesus Research in American and not members of the "Jesus Seminar," would agree with Theissen and Merz that in "his preaching of the kingly rule of God, Jesus revitalizes the traditional Israelite metaphor of the king in the framework of a modified eschatological expectation" (p. 246). For more reflections, see Charlesworth, "The Historical Jesus and Exegetical Theology," *The Princeton Seminary Bulletin* 22 (2001) 45–63. See esp. Theissen and Merz, *The Historical Jesus: A Comprehensive Guide*, trans. J. Bowden (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998). Also, note B. D. Ehrman, *Jesus: Apocalyptic Prophet of the New Millennium* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University, 1999).

¹¹³ See the insightful comments by Reed in his *Archaeology and the Galilean Jesus* 58–61.

¹¹⁴ Tiberias has not been the focus of a section of this review. Jesus perhaps never went there, and the early Roman ruins that remain almost always postdate him, belonging especially to the second and third centuries CE. See the convenient booklet by Y. Hirschfeld entitled *A Guide to Antiquity Sites in Tiberias* (Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority, 1991).

¹¹⁵ This is the Latin term used by E. Robinson. See his *Later Biblical Researches in Palestine and the Adjacent Region*, ed. J. Murray (London, 1856) 66.

excavations in places obviously frequented by this itinerant Galilean prophet have changed the map of Jesus Research. The present is the time for analysis and fruitful dialogue among New Testament specialists, in the attempt to clarify “Christian” origins from different areas of expertise in, e.g., philology, Qumran and pseudepigraphical research, exegesis, anthropology, sociology, and archaeology. We are learning to raise questions and correct an earlier myopic text-based reconstruction of Jesus’ teaching, by examining his life and thought in terms of his setting and social environment. Scholars who ignore archaeology and sociological studies in pursuing Jesus Research will henceforth be open to the charge that they are misinformed, indeed anachronistic.

Pauline Studies

EVIDENCE FOR CHRIST'S RESURRECTION ACCORDING TO PAUL: 1 COR 15:1–11¹

Birger Gerhardsson

In their presentation of the crucifixion and burial of Jesus as well as in their record of the discovery of the empty tomb, the evangelists are eager to mention eyewitnesses; they even state the names of two or three. This is especially striking in Mark, as I have discussed elsewhere.² In the following pages I will, by way of comparison, elucidate Paul's argument when he teaches about the resurrection of Christ in 1 Cor 15, especially vv. 1–8a. The comparison in this case is intended to demonstrate the distinctive character of the Pauline presentation, especially with regard to its extremely lean, stylized form.

1. *The Execution of Jesus*

Jesus of Nazareth was not active in public for more than two or three years, at the most four. Then his career was cut off. He was executed by crucifixion. This was an ignominious end for a charismatic and popular man. Crucifixion was the same as annihilation: the criminal was not only tortured and liquidated, he was also crushed socially, in maximal disgrace.³

¹ I dedicate this article to my Norwegian friend Peder Borgen with hearty congratulations for his 75th birthday.

² "Mark and the Female Witnesses," *Dumu-E₂-Dub-ba-a: Studies in Honor of Å. W. Sjöberg* (OPSNKF, 11), eds. H. Behrens, D. Loding, and M. T. Roth (Philadelphia, 1989) 217–26. The texts are (a) Mark 15:40–1, *et par.*, (b) Mark 15:46–7, *et par.*, (c) Mark 16:1–2, *et par.*; note the verb *θεωρεῖν*.

³ M. Hengel, *Crucifixion in the Ancient World and the Folly of the Message of the Cross*, trans. J. Bowden (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977). See also J. Blinzler, *Der Prozess Jesu: Das jüdische und das römische Gerichtsverfahren gegen Jesus Christus auf Grund der ältesten Zeugnisse dargestellt und beurteilt*, 4th ed. (Regensburg: F. Pustet, 1969) 357–94; E. Bammel, "Crucifixion as a Punishment in Palestine," *The Trial of Jesus: Cambridge Studies in Honour of C. F. D. Moule* (SBT; 2nd Ser. 13), (Naperville: Allenson, 1970) 162–5, J. A. Fitzmyer, "Crucifixion in Ancient Palestine, Qumran Literature, and the New Testament," *To Advance the Gospel* (New York: Crossroad, 1981) 125–46. For other

Those who put a stop to Jesus' activity expected of course that his adherents would give up his cause after this deathblow and go back to their normal life; but Jesus' disciples continued their master's work. What was remarkable, however, was that the leaders among them not only followed in the footsteps of their master—"in his name"—by preaching, teaching, and healing the sick as he had done; they also gave their message a new centre. That which now came into focus, as starting point and basic theme, was exactly the great scandal they had encountered: the crucifixion of their master. They lodged a forceful, unyielding protest against the condemnation of Jesus, insisting on his innocence. Furthermore, they made the sensational claim that he had risen from the dead and thereby been fully vindicated by God.⁴

That Jesus was sentenced by the Roman prefect Pontius Pilate is not open to serious doubt; I need not discuss that matter here. It is, however, worth considering that the Romans for a long time did not intervene beyond the execution of Jesus. As far as we know, they did not of their own accord do anything for several decades to follow up the action against Jesus by dealing with the leaders among his adherents. We do not see any steps in this direction until the emperor Nero's time, and even then only under special circumstances. This passivity of the Roman authorities harmonizes well with the assertion in the Gospels that the intervention against Jesus was not initiated by the Romans themselves and that Pilate passed the sentence only unwillingly.

Jewish leaders knew how enthusiastic rebellious movements centered around a charismatic man should be stopped. The technique was simple: once one neutralizes the leader, no further action is normally needed. Strike the shepherd, and the flock will soon scatter (cf. Acts 5:36f.).⁵ The Jesus movement, on the other hand, was not

aspects, cf. R. E. Brown's comprehensive work *The Death of the Messiah: From Gethsemane to the Grave*, 2 vols. (New York: Doubleday, 1994), with a large bibliography.

⁴ From the rich debate, see, e.g., Karl Lehmann, *Auferweckt am dritten Tag nach der Schrift: Früheste Christologie, Bekenntnisbildung und Schriftauslegung im Lichte von 1 Kor. 15,3-5* (QD 38; Freiburg, Basel, and Wien: Herder, 1968), and Harvey K. McArthur, "'On the Third Day' (1 Cor XV.4b and Rabbinic Interpretation of Hos VI.2)," *NTS* 18 (1971-2) 81-6. Cf. also G. Sellin, *Der Streit um die Auferstehung der Toten: Eine religionsgeschichtliche und exegetische Untersuchung von 1. Korinther 15* (FRLANT 138; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986).

⁵ Cf. Zech 13:7, applied to Jesus in Mark 14:27 and Matt 26:31, with the commentaries *ad loc.*

only situated within the boundaries of Jewish community; it was also religiously ardent and its activity very provocative. In this case, it was not easy to let matters take their course. The intimations in Acts of different interventions from leading Jewish authorities against the young church have certainly—in principle—real historical background.⁶ The Christians trod on sensitive ground.

The early Christian message about the death and resurrection of Christ dealt with peculiar matters, things which listeners could scarcely accept without further ado. The message that a crucified man, not only executed by the Romans but also rejected by leading men of Israel, was in fact Israel's predicted and eagerly awaited saviour, sounded as improbable as it was repugnant. And even more offensive and unbelievable, though in another way, were the assertions that this dishonored and annihilated man should have risen from the dead. The message of the young church was, as Paul aptly put it, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles (1 Cor 1:23).

The information from the early Christian documents that the Great Council, or some strong contingent within it, maneuvered to hand Jesus over into the power of the Romans seems to be historically correct. We can here leave open the question whether Jesus was condemned by a proper court decision or whether, at some informal gathering, it was decided to hand him over to the Romans and ask for his execution. It seems clear at any rate that Jewish men of authority rejected Jesus. If the execution of Jesus had been exclusively a Roman deed, many rabbis would have regarded him as a martyr, liquidated by the hated occupying power; so, inevitably, national psychology functions. The same would be true if Jesus had been executed exclusively at the instigation of a group of Sadducean priests. The rabbis did not think highly of the Sadducees, and that they would have identified themselves unanimously and completely with a Sadducean initiative, is highly improbable. To the decisions of the Great Council, on the other hand, the rabbis were always loyal. That was their general attitude and so they were in the case of Jesus.

⁶ See, e.g., 1 Cor 15:9, *et par.*; Gal 1:13; Acts 6:8–8:3; 9:1–2, *et par.*

2. *Early Christian Argumentation*

It is a very common opinion among scholars that the passion narrative in the Gospels emerged very early. Some (e.g. Rudolf Pesch) even reckon with the possibility that it originated in Jerusalem shortly after the execution of Jesus.⁷ For my part I find it probable that the passion narrative was one of the basic responses of the adherents of Jesus to the death sentence against him. In the face of the declarations of the authorities that Jesus was executed as a false messiah ("King of the Jews"), Jesus' disciples and adherents had to present their version of the case in some authoritative way. This was necessary from the very beginning. Therefore they put together an account of the action against Jesus, beginning with the arrest and ending with the empty tomb. The story, which we can study in expanded forms in the Gospels, is a sober presentation, accounting for the course of events in an unadorned fashion, without miraculous elements,⁸ and in its oldest form, totally without interpretive comments. Jesus is here seen through the eyes of his adherents, righteous and innocent, illegally condemned and executed. Among the notable features of the narrative are the assertions that the witnesses against Jesus contradict each other and that the charges come to nothing; and that Pilate declares him innocent, yet finds himself in the end forced to condemn him nonetheless. In a notice original to Matthew, Pilate's wife speaks in Jesus' favour.

I shall not here treat in detail the early Christian defence of Jesus' innocence. A few words, however, may be in order about the arguments of the early Christian preachers in support of their seemingly unrealistic conviction that the crucified Jesus had risen.

To judge from the New Testament writings, four kinds of arguments were especially important to them. The first and weightiest argument was that, after his death, Jesus had appeared—risen and living—to a number of witnesses, that he had spoken to them and

⁷ R. Pesch, *Das Evangelium der Urgemeinde wiederhergestellt und erläutert* (Freiburg, Basel, and Wien: Herder, 1979), and *idem*, "Das Evangelium in Jerusalem. Mk 14,12–26 als ältestes Überlieferungsgut der Urgemeinde," *Das Evangelium und die Evangelien: Vorträge vom Tübinger Symposium 1982* (WUNT 28), ed. P. Stuhlmacher (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1983) 113–55.

⁸ Luke only mentions a minor therapeutic miracle in the Gethsemane-episode: Jesus heals the ear which Peter had cut off (22:51). The Lukan insertion that an angel from heaven gave Jesus strength (22:43–4) is a late *Fremdkörper* in the passion narrative.

given them instructions. It goes without saying that this was the clearest, strongest, and most effective argument. What reliable men could certify that they had themselves “seen and heard” was taken seriously in the Jewish milieu. (I do not say that it was accepted uncritically.) Evidence from witnesses was valid.⁹ And in this case the personal disciples of Jesus could not only recount experiences they had had but could also quote what the resurrected Lord had said to them with his own mouth.

Second, it was claimed that Jesus’ tomb was found empty on the morning of the third day. This was a claim that every human eye could check—even the eyes of an enemy—and remained so for a long time afterwards. But it was in itself more puzzling than revealing. Moreover, this piece of information rested on a vulnerable base: the original testimony came from women and thus could easily be dismissed in the Jewish milieu.¹⁰

As a third argument it was emphasized that the recent events had occurred in accordance with what God’s prophets had foretold long ago, in the holy Scriptures.¹¹ That kind of argument had greater weight in many circles than we might readily recognize today.

⁹ See H. van Vliet, *No Single Testimony: A Study on the Adoption of the Law of Deut. 19:15 par. into the New Testament* (Studia Theologica Rheno-Traiectina 4; Utrecht: Kemink & Zoon, 1958), and A. A. Trites, *The New Testament Concept of Witness* (NTS MS, 31; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1977); and see next note.

¹⁰ On women as witnesses (e.g. Josephus, *Ant.* 4.219; Roš Hoš. 1.8; *Sheb.* 30a), cf. J. M. Baumgarten, “On the Testimony of Women in 1QS_a,” *JBL* 76 (1957) 266–9. On the situation in Early Christianity, see my article “Mark and the Female Witnesses,” and cf. M. Hengel, “Maria Magdalena und die Frauen als Zeugen,” *Abraham unser Vater: Juden und Christen im Gespräch über die Bibel. Festschrift für Otto Michel zum 60. Geburtstag*, eds. O. Betz, M. Hengel, and P. Schmidt (AGSU 5; Leiden: Brill, 1963) 243–56. L. Schottroff, “Maria Magdalena und die Frauen am Grabe Jesu,” *ET* 42 (1982) 3–25, is also rewarding, but the author underestimates the witness aspect in the evangelists’ presentations and explains away the fact that the women are neither called nor depicted as disciples (μαθηταί). They do not stand “under the cross”, as Dr. Schottroff says repeatedly (5–13), but only as onlookers “from a distance” (ἀπὸ μακρόθεν). Cf. further A. J. M. Wedderburn, *Beyond Resurrection* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1999) 50–61, and D. R. Catchpole’s discussion of the empty tomb question in *Resurrection People: Studies in the Resurrection Narratives of the Gospels* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 2000) 195–202. See now also S. Byrskog, *Story as History—History as Story: The Gospel Tradition in the Context of Ancient Oral History* (WUNT 123; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2001) esp. 73–82 and 190–8. Byrskog elucidates through the whole book the role of eyewitnesses in ancient history writing, as well as for those who preserved the Jesus tradition in early Christianity. He also draws attention to the interplay between witnessing, personal involvement, and interpreting in the process of transmission.

¹¹ C. H. Dodd’s classic *According to the Scripture: The Sub-structure of New Testament*

A fourth argument was that Jesus had himself foreseen and predicted his violent death and his resurrection. The sayings of Jesus in the Gospels include a good number of utterances to that effect, above all three clear and direct predictions of his suffering, death and resurrection.¹²

3. *A Basic Text in Paul: 1 Cor 15:3b-8a*

The Pauline letters were written in the 50's and 60's of the first century of our era. At least seven of them are today generally regarded as genuine; Paul wrote them with his own hand or dictated them with his own mouth (Rom, 1-2 Cor, Gal, Phil, 1 Thess and Philemon). We have here, in other words, early and genuine documents from one of the leading men of the primitive church, primary sources in the strictest sense. Paul even belonged to the limited group within early Christianity of those who could testify that they had themselves met the resurrected Jesus and received their commission directly from him, without intermediaries. His claim was, moreover, accepted by the other top leaders of the young church. Paul had the high status which an apostle enjoyed in early Christianity, an "apostle of Jesus Christ" (Gal 2:1-10).¹³

Theology (London: Nisbet, 1952), remains a little gem. From the sea of literature which has been written on these themes subsequently, I want to mention A. T. Hanson, *The Living Utterances of God: The New Testament Exegesis of the Old* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1983). The scriptures are adduced in many different ways. Clearest are the so-called formula quotations in the Gospel of Matthew. Most discrete are the testimonies of the scriptures used in the passion narrative: the narrative is to a considerable extent presented with words, expressions, motifs and allusions from the holy scriptures; see e.g. H. C. Kee, "The Function of Scriptural Quotations and Allusions in Mark 11-16," *Jesus und Paulus: Festschrift für W. G. Kümmel zum 70. Geburtstag*, eds. E. E. Ellis and E. Grässer (2nd ed.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978) 165-88.

¹² (1) Mark 8:31ff., *et par.*, (2) Mark 9:30ff., *et par.*, (3) Mark 10:32-34, *et par.* The requirement of two or three witnesses is satisfied here with testimonies from three different occasions (we see in the Qumran writings that that was possible in some circles). NB also passages such as Matt 12:40, *et par.*, 17:12, *et par.*, 20:28, *et par.*, 26:2, 24, 45, *et par.* Cf. C. A. Evans, "Did Jesus Predict his Death and Resurrection," *Resurrection*, eds. S. E. Porter, M. A. Hayes, and D. Tombs (JSNTS 186; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999) 82-97. I have not seen F. Bayer, *Jesus' Predictions of Vindication and Resurrection: The Provenance, Meaning and Correlation of the Synoptic Predictions* (WUNT II,20; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1986).

¹³ See my article "Die Boten Gottes und die Apostel Christi," *SEÅ* 27 (1962) 116-31.

How does Paul conduct his argumentation when he preaches that Jesus of Nazareth died innocently and rose from the dead? Let me go to the most rewarding passage, the compendium of the basic message of the young church that we find in 1 Cor 15:3b–8a.¹⁴ Paul has himself received this text from others (παρέλαβον, v. 3). It must, in its present or in an older form, have been put together already in the early 30's. It contains a number of words and phrases which Paul himself does not otherwise use in his letters ("according to the scriptures", "on the third day", "he appeared", "the twelve"). Paul regards this text as fundamental, a basic compendium. He had himself transmitted (παρέδωκα, v. 3), this very text (λόγος, v. 2),¹⁵ long ago to the congregation in Corinth; this took place at his founding visit there (ἐν πρώτοις).¹⁶ Now he finds himself forced to bring it to the fore once more, as part of his argumentation regarding the issue of whether there is a resurrection from the dead (v. 12). His words run as follows. The words I put in parenthesis (v. 6b and 8b–9) he presumably inserts first now:

- v. 3 For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures,
- v. 4 and that he was buried,
and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures,
- v. 5 and that he appeared to Cephas,
then to the twelve.
- v. 6 Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers [and sisters] at one time
(most of whom are still alive, though some have died).
- v. 7 Then he appeared to James,
then to all the apostles.
- v. 8 Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared to me.

¹⁴ For a thorough discussion of this text cf., e.g., Lehmann, *Auferweckt am dritten Tag nach der Schrift*; H. C. C. Cavallin, *Life after Death: Paul's Argument for the Resurrection of the Dead in 1 Cor 15*, Part 1 (ConBNT 7:1; Lund: Gleerup, 1974), and Sellin, *Streit um die Auferstehung der Toten*.

¹⁵ I read the expression τίνι λόγῳ (v. 2) as "by what logos" ("in what words", AV). It is true that the formula may be taken more blandly ("how", "in what way"), but here Paul is clearly presenting a quotation.

¹⁶ The formula ἐν πρώτοις can of course mean "above all" or "in the first place" but I think that the phrase in this solemn statement, where every word is so carefully chosen and pregnant, should be understood as meaning "as of first importance" (NRSV), "among the most important parts," or "at the beginning."

- v. 9 (For I am the least of the apostles,
 unfit to be called an apostle,
 because I persecuted the church of God, etc.) (NRSV).

This text, one of the most important passages in the New Testament, is not structured uniformly but gives the impression of being composite. As everybody knows, the commentators can rarely resist the temptation to dissect it and try to reconstruct a shorter, more primitive form. The task is delicate and the suggestions diverse: vv. 3b–4, 3b–5, 3b–6, 3b–7, or 3b–8a. The manuscript tradition is, apart from a couple of trivial details, totally unanimous. Therefore I think it is too hazardous to start by shortening the wording, then drawing conclusions based on a hypothetical *Urtext* which not a single manuscript supports. From a scholarly point of view it seems to be sounder to begin one's work with the text as found in our oldest manuscripts. It is not at all farfetched to presume that this text had a rough, composite appearance already when Paul wrote this letter, AD 57 or so. Had the list of the resurrection witnesses been expanded later, as many scholars believe, it ought to have harmonized better with the Gospels. As we know, secondary text alterations generally unmask themselves by their tendency to smooth over contradictions and harmonize. But this text is markedly independent; it has obviously been formulated quite separately from the Gospels; it reveals no influences from any of them.

Our text about the resurrection of Christ (1 Cor 15:3b–8a) is, as I have said, not specifically Pauline. The apostle points out that he himself received it (v. 3) and that the early Christian preachers all proclaim what this text says (v. 11). Here, however, I shall only discuss how Paul himself argues on the basis of this text, when he quotes it once again in his correspondence with the Corinthians.

4. *Detailed Comments on 1 Cor 15:3b–8a*

In order to characterize this survey of the Easter events, I will in the following make a series of short comments. It is important to keep in mind throughout that the quoted passage is part of a context in which Paul pleads for the early Christian conviction that *there is a resurrection of the dead* (v. 12).

1. The cited text has the form of a brief, sober account of facts. Even the parenthetical insertions Paul now makes (vv. 6b and 8b–9) have that character. Only the two introductory, governing statements

about Christ's death and resurrection (vv. 3f.) have at the same time a theological dimension. They differ thus somewhat from the following statements.

2. The text begins abruptly. One may well wonder whether the passage is a section which Paul has lifted out from a larger context or whether it started with the death of Jesus even in its earlier form. In his letters, Paul does not, in any explicit or concrete way, pause over the sufferings of Jesus in the passion narrative,¹⁷ but we might expect, remembering the role the *cross* plays for him, that in a text of this kind, he would mention especially that Christ was *crucified*. We notice, however, in these condensed introductory words that the general words "Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures" (v. 3b), cover the crucifixion—and give a hint of its meaning as well.

3. Jesus is here simply and directly called Christ. This is Pauline usage. When the evangelists tell about Jesus, even in the passion narrative, they use his personal name: Jesus. For them, the title Christ has not yet begun to be used as a simple personal name, capable of standing alone.¹⁸ But for Paul—the *Christian* Paul—the appellation Christ is used exclusively of Jesus. The expected eschatological saviour is Jesus; no other figure comes in question (as in Acts 9:22, 17:3–4, 18:5, 28). The apostle often uses the word "Christ" by itself as the personal name of Jesus. Here too, Jesus is spontaneously and categorically taken to be the Messiah.¹⁹ Thus the very name contradicts the declaration of the authorities that Jesus was a *false* Messiah.

Werner Kramer has shown that the appellation Christ is closely connected with the death of Jesus in the Pauline material.²⁰ The

¹⁷ Note the explicit words in 1 Tim 6:13. In the genuine letters, Phil 2:5–8 and 1 Cor 11:23 seem to come nearest. Paul often touches upon the motif that suffering with Christ belongs to the lot of Christ's followers, especially that of an apostle, e.g. Rom 12:14; 1 Cor 4:9–13, 15:30f.; 2 Cor 1:5ff.; 4:7–12, 7:4, 11:23–27; Phil 1:29–30; 2:17; 3:10–11; Col 1:24; 1 Thess 1:6; 3:3. In these passages, he certainly has the sufferings of Jesus in the passion narrative in mind, but he does not mention any concrete episodes or details.

¹⁸ Luke, however, gives Jesus the simple name "the Lord" at two or three places in his narrative: 7:13, 22:61 and possibly 16:8.

¹⁹ See W. Kramer, *Christ, Lord, Son of God*, trans. B. Hardy (SBT 50; London: SPCK, 1966) 133–50, and N. A. Dahl, "The Messiahship of Jesus in Paul," *Jesus the Christ: The Historical Origins of Christological Doctrine*, ed. D. H. Juel (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1991) 15–25.

²⁰ Kramer, *Christ, Lord*, 19–44. See also Dahl, "The Messiahship of Jesus" 15–25. Dahl argues convincingly for the historicity of the inscription on Jesus' cross, "The Crucified Messiah," *Jesus the Christ* 27–47.

pregnant introduction of our text seems to be directed against the verdict of the authorities. The adherents of Jesus maintain here without further ado that he was the Messiah and that his death was a salvific death for others.

4. In the passion narrative, the evangelists mention human witnesses of the crucifixion, and two or three of them are named, all women; in John the beloved disciple is added.²¹ No such witnesses are mentioned in our text. Instead, another type of testimony to the mystery of Jesus' death is referred to: the holy scriptures, in other words, Israel's prophets of old; the death and resurrection of Jesus accords with their words. Here a general reference to the scriptures is meant; Isaiah 53 was certainly closest at hand, but a set of specified passages was hardly intended this time.

5. The burial of Jesus is mentioned in this brief text. It was an old standard formulation that somebody "died and was buried,"²² but the two verbs are not connected in this text. The burial is mentioned separately, as a specific act, here as in the Gospels. It was important to early Christianity to stress the fact that the body of Jesus was properly entombed. It was not self-evident that an executed criminal would receive a proper burial, least of all a crucified man. In this way it was also stressed that the death of Jesus was real; thus the stage was set for the following words about his resurrection. Perhaps a further intention was to dismiss the suggestion that his heavenly exaltation occurred directly from the cross. No witnesses are mentioned at this point in our text. In the Gospels, on the other hand, those who buried Jesus (Joseph of Arimathea, in John also Nicodemus) are mentioned as well as those in the Synoptic Gospels who saw the event.²³ That is not done here.

6. The empty tomb and the experiences of the women which play such an important role in the Gospels are not mentioned at all. The dating "on the third day" may possibly have an original connection with the discovery of the women (see below) but this is not expressed, nor is it very probable. The reason for the silence on this point is not that Paul and his predecessors despised women, but rather the

²¹ See Gerhardsson, "Mark and the Female Witnesses."

²² Gen 35:8, 19; Num 20:1; Deut 10:6; Judg 8:32; 1 Kgs 2:10, 11:43; 2 Chr 35:24, etc.; cf. Acts 2:29. K. H. Rengstorff, *Die Auferstehung Jesu: Form, Art und Sinn der urchristlichen Osterbotschaft*, 2nd ed. (Witten-Ruhr: Luther-Verlag, 1954) 37ff.

²³ Gerhardsson, "Mark and the Female Witnesses."

simple awareness of how readily testimonies from women might be belittled or ignored.²⁴

7. The resurrection itself is not related, neither here nor anywhere else in the material from early Christianity.²⁵ The resurrection preserves its character of a mystery, which is mentioned and skirted, never depicted. Here it is mentioned and, by way of further discussion, is said to have occurred "on the third day in accordance with the scriptures." The witness of the holy books is stressed a second time. The reference to them (cf. Luke 24:13–52) is thus so important that it bears repetition, even in this extremely brief text.

The expression "resurrection (or resurrected) on the third day" cannot be found in the holy scriptures. It is correct that the targum interprets the words "on the third day" in Hos 6:2 as a reference to the eschatological resurrection of the dead, but it is hard to know if this interpretation even existed in early Christian times; nor, if it did, is it clear how this general statement could be applied to the resurrection of Jesus: an individual, past event.²⁶ It seems to me, in the end, most probable that this dating in a chronologically arranged text comes from the first appearance of the resurrected Jesus, the one to Peter, or—*possibly*—from the discovery of the empty tomb.²⁷

8. Then the appearances of the resurrected one to a number of male witnesses are enumerated. We meet here constantly (vv. 5, 6,

²⁴ A synoptic comparison shows that the story of the empty tomb was transmitted as the end of the passion narrative, while the stories about the resurrected Jesus were transmitted individually and soon constituted a bloc of their own. Does this observation explain something in 1 Cor 15:3b–8a?

²⁵ The fantastic scenes in the Gospel of Peter 34–44 contrast sharply with the sober restraint in the early Christian texts about the resurrection and lack all interest for our present theme.

²⁶ Pace Lehmann, *Auferweckt am dritten Tag* 159–230. On the motif, see Joachim Jeremias, "Die Drei-Tage-Worte der Evangelien," *Tradition und Glaube: Das frühe Christentum in seiner Umwelt. Festgabe für Karl Georg Kuhn zum 65. Geburtstag*, eds. G. Jeremias, H.-W. Kuhn, and H. Stegemann (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971) 221–9. The pertinent rabbinic passages are recorded in McArthur, "'On the Third Day'" 81–6.

²⁷ The proposal that the expression "on the third day" comes from Jesus' predictions of his passion, which are (later on) recorded in the Gospels, does not seem probable. In their present form these predictions are clearly influenced by the evangelists' knowledge about their fulfillment. Moreover, the concluding stereotypical words about the resurrection hardly belonged to the pre-paschal form of these logia. On the predictions, cf. most recently Evans, "Did Jesus Predict His Death and Resurrection?" 82–97. It is important to observe that in the Gospels none of these predictions is part of a Christological or soteriological context. Their context is always teaching about the terms of discipleship, serving and suffering.

7, 8) the expression ὥφθη with the dative, “he let himself be seen”. The verb can have different meanings, and the verbal form be understood differently, but in our context I think it should be taken as an intransitive passive form: “he let himself be seen”, “he appeared.” It has been demonstrated that in all probability the expression is here, as well in a number of similar passages in the New Testament (Luke 24:34; Acts 9:17, 13:31, 26:16), derived most immediately from Old Testament narratives (LXX) where a heavenly figure makes himself perceivable for some mortal human being: Gen 12:7, 17:1, 26:2, 24, 35:9, 48:3; Exod 3:2, etc. (cf., e.g., Acts 7:2, 30, 35).²⁸ The expression reflects the belief, not that the dead body of Jesus had been resuscitated and that certain witnesses caught sight of him in a normal earthly way, but that Jesus appeared himself from the celestial world: the invisible heavenly Jesus made himself visible, he let himself be seen by human eyes. The focus of the text is not on the seeing of the witnesses but on the appearances of the resurrected Jesus.²⁹ I do not think it is meaningful to discuss if the enumerated events are of a diverse character in this brief, Pauline text.³⁰ The most natural interpretation is that Paul for his part treats all the appearances alike.³¹

9. In the formulation that the resurrected one appeared (ὥφθη) to somebody, the whole event is of course meant, including that the heavenly figure *said* something to the chosen human being, as was the case when Paul writes: “Am I not an apostle, have I not seen (ἐώρακα) Jesus our Lord?” (1 Cor 9:1). A decisive element in the resurrection narratives is that the resurrected Jesus always addresses

²⁸ Rengstorff, *Die Auferstehung Jesu*, 37–40; J. Lindblom, *Gesichte und Offenbarungen: Vorstellungen von göttlichen Weisungen und übernatürlichen Erscheinungen im ältesten Christentum* (ASHLU, 65; Lund: Gleerup, 1968) 78–113. Alternative interpretations are discussed in the commentaries *ad loc.*

²⁹ J. Roloff, *Apostolat—Verkündigung—Kirche: Ursprung, Inhalt und Function des kirchlichen Apostelamtes nach Paulus, Lukas und den Pastoralbriefen* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn, 1965) 48–9.

³⁰ For a perceptive discussion of the character of Jesus’ resurrected body and the nature of the visions in the different texts, cf. S. T. Davis, “‘Seeing’ the Risen Jesus,” *The Resurrection: An Interdisciplinary Symposium on the Resurrection of Jesus*, eds. S. T. Davis, D. Rendall and G. O’Collins (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1997) 126–47, Wedderburn, *Beyond Resurrection*, 66–99 and 122–52, and Catchpole, *Resurrection People* 203–14.

³¹ Byrskog, *Story as History—History as Story*, 226–7.—Davis argues penetratingly for the thesis that Paul’s experience in its nature was different than that of the others, “‘Seeing’” 137–9. Thus also Wedderburn, *Beyond Resurrection* 66–99.

his human witnesses. He speaks about himself and his position and gives them a commission. In the Lukan writings the resurrected Jesus tells his witnesses a good deal. The same applies to the narratives in John.³² The words of the resurrected one are certainly included even here in 1 Cor 15:5–8a, but they are not mentioned.

10. The enumeration of appearances is certainly meant chronologically. The list starts with Peter and ends with Paul, the two pillar apostles. First in the series stands an appearance to the firstling disciple and firstling apostle, Simon Peter, here called Cephas. This event is also mentioned in the concluding chapter of the Lukan Gospel (24:34), where he is called Simon. This first of the appearances—the “protophany”—is thus mentioned at two places in the New Testament, but it is nowhere narrated.³³ Yet it must have been regarded as the most important of its sort.³⁴

11. Second in the enumeration is an appearance to the group “the twelve” (this is, as we know, the name of the group even when some member is temporarily missing).³⁵ All the Gospels mention some such event, including the Gospel of John. (In Mark it is, however, only foreboded, 16:7.) In addition Acts relates appearances over a forty-day period.³⁶ The narratives are not uniform; they show variations.³⁷

³² In the narratives of the Gospels, those who “see” the resurrected Jesus always receive a task; the only exception is the women in Luke (they walk at their own initiative to the disciples and relate their news, 24:5–11). But there is an immense difference between the minor tasks that the women at the tomb receive (Mark 16:7; Matt 28:7, 10, and John 20:17) and the great commission that the resurrected One gives his male disciples: Matt 28:16–20; Luke 24:33–51; Acts 1:1–9; John 20:19–23, 24–9. They are made witnesses (μάρτυρες): Luke 24:48; Acts 1:8, 22, 2:32, 3:15, 5:32, 10:39, 41, 13:31, 22:15, 18, 23:11, 26:16. It was not very meaningful in the Jewish milieu to refer to female witnesses.

³³ It is, however, conceivable that the core part of this tradition has been introduced into Jesus’ solemn words to Peter in Matt 16:(16)17–9. Cf. A. Vögtle, “Das Problem der Herkunft von ‘Mt 16,17–19’,” *Offenbarungsgeschehen und Wirkungsgeschichte* (Freiburg: Herder, 1985) 109–40.

³⁴ Wedderburn says aptly, after a discussion of the protophany to Peter, that this episode proves to be “extremely—and surprisingly—elusive,” *Beyond Resurrection* 275–6, n. 275.

³⁵ In Matt 28:16; Mark 16:14; Luke 24:33; Acts 1:26, 2:14, the reduction to eleven is nevertheless expressed. δώδεκα is changed to ἐνδεκα also in our text, in v. 5, in some manuscripts (D* F G 330 464* it vg syrhmng goth and some others), but this pedantic interference is clearly secondary.

³⁶ Matt 28:16–20; Luke 24:33–51; John 20:19–23, 24–29; Acts 1:1–9; cf. 10:41, 13:31.

³⁷ In Mark and Matthew this event is instinctively located in Galilee; Luke locates

12. The appearance to more than five hundred brethren at one time is not mentioned anywhere else in the New Testament. The suggestion that it could be the same occasion as that related in Acts 2 is improbable. The parenthetic notice (v. 6b) that most of these "brethren" are still alive, is certainly a Pauline insertion at the time of writing. In my view, Paul often felt free to make brief interpretive or supplementary insertions in transmitted oral texts.

13. Nor do we receive any information elsewhere in the New Testament writings about the appearance to James, "the brother of the Lord".³⁸ But it is nevertheless probable that early on James "saw" the resurrected Jesus. This provides the simplest explanation of the fact that James and the other brothers of Jesus, although not believing in him during his earthly activity (Mark 3:21, 31–35; John 7:5), became prominent members of the first Christian community in Jerusalem (1 Cor 9:5; Acts 1:14), and above all of the fact that James even received a leading position in this mother community (cf. Gal 1:18–19; 2:9; Acts 1:14; 12:17; 15:13; 21:18).³⁹

14. The expression "all the apostles" refers, in my opinion, to all the men who—after Peter, the eleven, and the five hundred but before Paul—were given a personal meeting with the resurrected Jesus and received their commission directly from him. They were not numerous. Nor did all the resurrection witnesses receive an apostolic commission.⁴⁰

(NB the command in Acts 1:4) all the appearances to the eleven exclusively in Jerusalem, both in the Gospel and in Acts. John does so as well. Only occasionally is the number of the human present clearly delimited.

³⁸ The tradition which Jerome quotes in *Vir. inl.* 2 from the Gospel of the Hebrews is certainly secondary and unreliable.; *Evangelien*, Vol. 2 of *Apocrypha*, ed. E. Klostermann, 3rd ed. (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1929) 8: *Dominus autem, cum dedisset sindonem seruo sacerdotis, iuit ad Iacobum et apparuit ei—iurauerat enim Iacobus se non comesurum panem ab illa hora qua biberat calicem domini, donec uideret eum resurgentem a dormientibus—rursusque post paulum adferte (ait dominus) mensam et panem. Statimque additur: tulit panem et benedixit et fregit et dedit Iacobo iusto et dixit ei: frater mi, comede panem tuum, quia resurrexit filius hominis a dormientibus* ("Now the Lord, when he had given the linen cloth to the servant of the priest, went to James and appeared to him—for James had sworn that he would not eat bread from the hour when he had drunk the Lord's cup until he should see him risen again from among them that sleep—and then he [the Lord] said, 'Bring ye a table and a bread,' and immediately it is added, He took the bread and gave thanks and broke it and gave it to James the Just and said to him: 'Eat the bread, my brother, for the Son of Man is risen from among them that sleep'").

³⁹ Cf. R. H. Fuller, *The Formation of the Resurrection Narratives* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971) 36–8.

⁴⁰ See Gerhardsson "Die Boten Gottes und die Apostel Christi," 116–31, and cf. Roloff, *Apostolat—Verkündigung—Kirche* 57–82.

15. The appearance to Paul himself is also mentioned in this series. It seems to me most probable that Paul here takes his own experience as an event of the same kind as those of the other apostles: the resurrected Christ appeared as a figure from the celestial world.⁴¹ Paul's apostolate was, according to his own words, accepted by the other apostles (Gal 2:7ff.). In his letters, Paul alludes to this significant event (e.g. 1 Cor 9:1; Gal 1:15ff.) but he never narrates explicitly how it came about. Presumably he used to do so orally, early on in his activity at any given place. Luke for his part, narrates this event at three places in Acts (9:3–9; 22:6–11; 26:12–8), allowing himself certain liberties with the details in these passages. Paul seems to regard the series of resurrection appearances as concluded: he was himself the last one to see the resurrected Lord.

16. Nowhere in this text is the *place* of the event mentioned, whether Jerusalem or Galilee or some other place. The perspective, in this very short text, is not a Galilean one as in Mark and Matthew, nor a Jerusalemite one as in the resurrection narratives of the Lukan writings. The text here lacks all interest in places.

17. It is striking that the appearances in only two of the enumerated cases were to single persons (Peter and James).⁴² Whether encounters with individuals are included in the reference to "all the apostles" (see 14 above), is hard to say. In all the remaining cases, it was *groups* that were allowed to see the resurrected Jesus. "Visions" in the ordinary sense (including hallucinations, etc.) are generally seen by individuals.

18. Most of the witnesses who are mentioned here were already adherents of Jesus when they "saw" the resurrected one. Not all of them, however: Paul was directly hostile (v. 9; Gal 1:13; Phil 3:6) and James did not believe at this stage. That means that, according to our passage, these experiences did not presuppose belief in Jesus, nor even a positive disposition.⁴³

19. When the primitive apostles accepted Paul's apostolate, he was certainly included in the list, even in the form in which others taught

⁴¹ We find in John the singular notice that Mary Magdelene meets the resurrected Jesus when he is on his way up to the Father (20:17). When Jesus appears to his disciples on the evening the same day, he has already ascended and is able to hand over the Spirit (vv. 19–23, read in the light of 7:39 and 16:7).

⁴² In the narratives about the appearance to Paul, his fellow-travellers and their reactions are always mentioned, Acts 9:7, 22:9, and 26:13–14.

⁴³ On the contrary, nobody who had "seen" the resurrected Jesus seems to have *remained* unbelieving (unless Matt 28:17b should be so interpreted).

it. But their formulation was certainly not as pejorative as Paul's own words in our text. Nor, presumably, did Paul himself speak so critically about himself every time he touched upon this subject.

20. I shall not speculate here about how the enumeration in its original form may have ended. The question of whether or not the text Paul is quoting here in 1 Cor 15:3b–8a is complete or lifted out of a wider context yields no certain answer, either at the beginning or at the end.

21. It is striking that this text is so simple and pared down. Not one superfluous word appears. No circumstantial facts are mentioned. A series of occurrences are enumerated with one single aspect in focus, the aspect of evidence. The witnesses are of only two kinds: the Scriptures and the apostles. The theological significance of the events is not mentioned, apart from the fact that the death of Christ is in the introduction called a salvific death ("for our sins"). The appearances of the resurrected Jesus are listed so briefly and barely that the text hardly reveals anything at all to listeners who do not either already know of the mentioned occurrences or receive complementary information. The scanty information must presume that the listed events will be explained more fully.

22. The facts under review are puzzling. On one hand, Paul stresses in this chapter that the early Christian message *stands and falls* with the resurrection of Christ (vv. 17ff.). If this has not taken place, "we" are entangled in a miserable self-deception and walk around spreading false rumours (vv. 12–19). He supports his account with references to witnesses: the Scriptures and a number of disciples. The enumeration of men who have met the resurrected one is certainly intended to give the sceptic a chance to turn to eye-witnesses and ask them, consulting those who have "seen and heard" for themselves. Note the inserted reminder that most of the 500 are still alive when Paul writes (v. 6b). The matter thus has decisive importance. On the other hand, Paul and the other New Testament writers show an almost irritating carelessness when it comes to details. And several of the narratives have, in spite of their great significance, been lost. Most incomprehensible is the fact that the young church has not taken the trouble to preserve the narrative about the protophany to Peter;⁴⁴ for the evangelists the appearance to the twelve

⁴⁴ Cf., however, above, n. 33.

has instead become the most important resurrection occurrence—we have reason to ask why.⁴⁵

5. *A Concluding Comparison*

There are scholars who maintain that the oldest texts about Christ's resurrection consisted of brief formulaic statements and that the real narratives are secondary, all along the line. I think this is a desk concoction lacking an anchor in reality. Elementary psychological considerations tell us that the early Christians could scarcely mention such intriguing events as those taken up in the statements about Jesus' death and resurrection without being able to elaborate on them. Listeners must immediately have been moved to wonder and ask questions. Regarding our text there must have existed in support of the different points in the enumeration—the death of Jesus, the burial, the events on the third day, the appearances of the resurrected one to Cephas and the twelve, to James and all the apostles, etc.—narratives about how they came about. Our text is, as I have already pointed out, a list rather than a narrative. It cries out for elaboration. A preacher can begin with an outline but he cannot go on forever repeating mere outlines.

If we compare the evidence for Christ's resurrection which Paul recalls in 1 Cor 15:3b–8a with the passion narrative in the synoptic Gospels, we note that the latter passages present a sober historical account of Jesus' suffering and death without spelling out their theological significance. If we allow a certain reservation for the first two sentences, the former text is similar: it deals with what happened without supplying any theological interpretation of its meaning, not even in the insertions (vv. 6b and 8b–9). Here just the appearances of the resurrected Jesus for different witnesses are listed.

The common element with the resurrection narratives of Matthew and Luke is that the resurrected Jesus lets himself be seen and that witnesses are mentioned. In the Gospels, however, great stress is laid upon what the resurrected *says* on these occasions. He speaks about

⁴⁵ Did the appearance to Peter—and to James as well—disappear because the witness was in this case a single man? The appearance to the twelve, which is the most important in the written Gospels, had of course higher value as evidence than the appearance to Peter alone. On the appearance to Paul, cf. note 42 above.

himself and his position and gives his witnesses a commission. Nothing of this is expressed in 1 Cor 15. Here we just find a dry enumeration of the incidents and the witnesses, and these are solely mentioned as *eye-witnesses*. The contrast between the resurrection narratives and this list is considerable. It reflects two different genres, in one case narratives, in the other an enumeration.

I cannot escape the conclusion that the text I have commented upon here, a synopsis of the early Christian presentation of Christ's resurrection, *presupposes* narratives, telling how it came about. Considering the fact that only some of the narratives have been preserved to posterity, we must surmise that this material was not kept together in a written text but rather made up of a loosely composed oral collection or—more probably—a number of individual narratives.⁴⁶

As I said above, the passion narrative seems to be an early Christian response to the verdict of the Jewish and Roman authorities in the case of Jesus. The passion narrative barely touches upon the message of the early Christian kerygma about the meaning of the death of Jesus. The perspective is limited: the presentation has the character of a simple white-book, though, to be sure, the wording is saturated with allusions, intended to broaden and deepen the picture for listeners familiar with the holy scriptures.⁴⁷ The passion narrative is a plea made by one of the parties in the case, but in its oldest forms it only relates the events, seen through the eyes of the adherents. The same applies *mutatis mutandis* to the enumeration in 1 Cor 15:3b–8a.

The passion narrative is thus theologically very meagre. It must be interpreted and developed.⁴⁸ The enumeration in 1 Cor 15 is

⁴⁶ Cf. my book *Memory and Manuscript: Oral Tradition and Written Transmission in Rabbinic Judaism and Early Christianity* (ASNU 22; Lund: Gleerup; Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1961; new ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Livonia: Dove, 1998) 299–302. There I suggested that the abbreviated enumeration in our text may have played a similar role in its oral stage as the association words (*simanim*) in certain rabbinic texts: chains of brief words or syllables providing support for the memory; they hint at each text and indicate the order of the items in the collection (155–6). The similarity is not complete but it is not difficult to imagine that even early Christianity used some such devices for keeping important texts in memory.

⁴⁷ Cf. Kee, "The Function of Scriptural Quotations and Allusions in Mark 11–16" 165–88.

⁴⁸ The fact that the Gospel of Mark ends as abruptly as it does, and seems to have done so even from the beginning, still requires explanation. I think Mark could stop where he stops because early Christianity had already a standard collection of narratives about Christ's resurrection, which he did not need to include

even leaner. This passage demands not only interpretation, but also a proper narration of the listed events.

Both the passion narrative and Paul's enumeration have always needed to be complemented with exposition and theology. None of them has ever been able to function on its own. Both a fuller kerygma of Christ's death and resurrection and a deepening and enlarging *didache* on Christian belief and Christian life have always been necessary. The New Testament letters give us examples of how apostles, prophets and teachers tried to meet these needs in the young church.

I think we egregiously misjudge the passion narrative in the Gospels, and to an even higher degree the enumeration in 1 Cor 15:3b–8a, if we take these texts as "complete" presentations, calculated to stand on their own feet and operate on their own, in splendid isolation. In both cases we are dealing with *substratum* texts, textual undergarments, so to speak: passages with a fundamental content but from the very beginning presupposing exposition, elucidation, and complement.

This insight can of course be broadened, it has a certain general application. The 27 books of the New Testament may be of different character, but they are, all of them, pieces detached and removed from a living context 2,000 years old: the pulsating life of early Christian communities. The basic task of historical exegesis is—and always will be—to interpret them as parts of their original broader context.⁴⁹

in his Gospel. He had, for that matter, not found it necessary to include the invaluable *logia* collection Q either.

⁴⁹ Stephen Westerholm polished my English; I thank him.

PAUL, HOMOSEXUALITY AND CHRISTIAN ETHICS

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1. *Introductory Observations*

For many centuries homosexuality was a tabooed subject. It was associated with so much embarrassment, pain, remorse, embitterment and estrangement that homosexuals, their families and Christian communities persistently avoided it. However, an issue does not solve itself merely because people pretend it to be non-existent. Therefore, it should be welcomed that the phenomenon of homosexuality has been brought into the open and is being discussed in Christian circles world-wide.

One of the hottest debated aspects of this discussion is the biblical position regarding homosexuality, and especially that of Paul. Basically two sharply contrasting poles have emerged. The one starts with the *a priori* assumption that all manifestations of homosexuality are ethically wrong and that the Bible cannot but sanction this position. The problem of a constitutionally fixed homosexual orientation is either ignored or minimised.¹ The other pole denies the relevancy to modern homosexual behaviour of those biblical texts that have traditionally been understood as denunciations of homosexuality. One strategy is to limit a pronouncement to sexual practices within a cultic context, or to pederasty. These "results" are then published as the biblical position on homosexuality. The book of John Boswell is a prominent example of this tendency.²

Richard Hays indicated quite correctly that one of the basic mistakes in this debate is the failure to distinguish clearly between exegesis and hermeneutics.³ On the one hand, today's questions and problems are simply superimposed on the biblical texts. The latter

¹ For criticism, see Victor P. Furnish, *The Moral Teaching of Paul* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1979) 66; R. B. Hays, "Relations Natural and Unnatural: A Response to John Boswell's Exegesis of Rom 1," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 14 (1986) 200.

² John Boswell, *Christianity, Social Tolerance and Homosexuality* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1980).

³ Hays, "Relations Natural and Unnatural" 185, 211.

are forced to ventriloquise what we would like them to say. On the other hand, biblical pronouncements are often naïvely understood to be directly applicable to modern situations, regardless of varying frames of reference.

It seems necessary to distinguish clearly between four phases of enquiry: (1) the exegetical enquiry into the position, if any, of the biblical authors on homosexuality, (2) the hermeneutical question of whether and how such a position would be applicable to modern circumstances, (3) the development of a responsible, present-day ethical position regarding homosexuality; and (4) determining the appropriate ecclesiastical and pastoral approach towards, and ministry to homosexuals. This article will concentrate on the first phase. However, some hermeneutical observations will also be made, followed by a few suggestions regarding Christian ethics.

2. *Exegetical Observations*

The scope of this article does not allow for a discussion of all the standard texts which could have a direct or indirect bearing on homosexuality. I shall concentrate on the two immediately relevant texts in the undisputed Pauline letters, *viz.* 1 Cor 6:9 and Rom 1:26–27, and especially on the latter, because it is the decisive New Testament pronouncement on this issue.

1 Corinthians 6:9

The vice catalogue in 1 Cor 6:9–10, enumerating 10 examples of ἄδικοι who will, according to Paul, not inherit the kingdom of God, contains the two terms μαλακοί and ἀρσενοκοῖται.⁴ The research of Martin⁵ has shown that in Greek literature μαλακοί could refer to all grades and forms of what was associated with effeminacy: slug-gards, cowards, people who lived in decadence and luxury, even those who studied too much! Nevertheless it was also used for males, often youths, occupying the passive role in a homosexual relationship.⁶

⁴ In 1 Tim 1:10 only the latter occurs.

⁵ D. B. Martin, "Arsenokoitês and malakos. Meanings and Consequences," *Biblical Ethics and Homosexuality: Listening to Scripture*, ed. R. L. Brawley (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1996) 117–136.

⁶ For examples see "μαλακός" *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other*

Already Plato used *μαλακία* with this connotation.⁷ Because *ἀρσενοκοῖται* is most probably a coinage from Lev 18:22 and 20:13,⁸ it can hardly indicate something other than the active male participants in a homosexual relationship.⁹ The co-occurrence of *ἀρσενοκοῖται* in 1 Cor 6:9 would therefore denote the passive and active partners in such a relationship.

Scroggs¹⁰ and others will be only partially correct in limiting Paul's verdict to pederasty. Pederasty was the most prevalent form of homosexual activity in this era. However, the *μαλακοί* could also have been adult men who played the passive role in same-sex activities. The *μαλακοί* as well as the *ἀρσενοκοῖται* would not necessarily have been homosexuals. The majority of them could have been heterosexuals who engaged in, preferred or were forced (e.g., in the case of slaves) into homosexual relationships. It is a well-known fact that Corinth, due to its much frequented harbours and its cosmopolitan population, was infamous for its immorality. It is to be expected that various homosexual practices would have been the order of the day.

Within the context of 1 Cor 6, Paul encourages his readers to suffer wrong rather than initiate a lawsuit against a fellow Christian. In v.9 he contends that persons guilty of wrongdoing will not inherit the kingdom of God. This "wrongdoing" clearly has a moral connotation. Its content is spelled out in the catalogue of vices (vv. 9c–10), which includes the reference to homosexual practices. However, in v. 11, he qualifies his statement with the remark "and such were some of you", branding these sinful practices as belonging to the past.

It is not clear why Paul mentions the *μαλακοί* first. In terms of honour and shame it would have been more disgraceful for a man to play the female role. However, the vice list does not really show signs of a hierarchy. Immoral people, idolaters, adulterers, etc., are simply mentioned alongside one another. The reason for the precedence of the *μαλακοί* may simply have been stylistic, *μοιχοί* and

Early Christian Literature, 3rd ed., rev. and ed. by F. W. Danker (Chicago and London: University of Chicago, 2000) 613.

⁷ *Laws* 8.836 D–E.

⁸ D. F. Wright, "Homosexuality. The Relevance of the Bible," *EvQ* 61 (1989) 297; L. C. Boughton, "Biblical Texts and Homosexuality," *ITQ* 58 (1992) 150.

⁹ See also "*ἀρσενοκοῖται*," BAGD 134–5.

¹⁰ R. Scroggs, *The New Testament and Homosexuality* (Philadelphia; Westminster, 1983) 108.

μαλακοί corresponding to the figure of parechesis (likeness of sound). We find this same phenomenon also in the vice lists of Rom 1:29–31 and Gal 5:19–21, one term suggesting and followed by a similarly sounding one.

Apart from the fact that Paul is repudiating homosexual activities in this passage, it is also important that he does not label those partaking in them as greater sinners than the rest. It may also be asked whether v. 11 does not indicate that Paul, if he had an inkling of what is nowadays termed fixed homosexual orientation, did not regard it as irreversible.¹¹ However, that would be reading too much into a generalising context.

Romans 1:26–27

These two verses form the *locus classicus* for the biblical evaluation of homosexuality. It should, however, be pointed out immediately that Paul's focus is not on an ethical assessment of homosexuality. That such an evaluation can be gleaned from the text, is in fact only a by-product of his main argument.

In Rom 1:18–3:20 Paul depicts how all humanity stands guilty before God. Following on that, he unfolds in 3:21–4:25 the gospel message that God justifies sinners through faith on the basis of Christ's death. Rom 1:26–27 forms part of the pericope 1:18–32, in which the depravity of the non-Jewish world before God is portrayed. The argument develops in two main phases: In 1:18–23 Paul shows how the nations, in spite of their ability to recognise God's eternal power and deity from his works of creation, denied him the honour and the gratitude which he deserved. In the famous words of Karl Barth: they did not let God be God. This is man's primordial rebellion,¹² his basic sin, the mother of all sin, the sin against the first commandment. Later on Paul shows how the Jew, in his own way, is also guilty of this contravention (2:17–24; cf. 2:3). The next step occurs when man substitutes God for the idols, the sin against the second commandment (vv. 23, 25). In the second phase (1:24–32), Paul depicts God's reaction: Three times mention is made of God's "giving over" of the nations (vv. 24, 26, 28). This is a deliberate,

¹¹ But *vide infra*.

¹² Ernst Käsemann, *An die Römer*, HNT 8a (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1974) 43.

judicial act of God (cf. v. 18).¹³ By withdrawing his restraining hand, he delivers them up to their own passions. The most terrible thing that could happen to man is to be given over to himself. His bartering with God became his own punishment.¹⁴ The sins pertaining to homosexuality (vv. 24–27) and those enumerated in the list of vices (vv. 29–31) portray the catastrophic implications of man's over-turning of God's design.

The fact that Paul mentions homosexuality first, and devotes relatively much linguistic space to it, has strengthened popular perceptions that homosexuality is the most abominable sin. There is some logic in this conclusion, because the first slot in a syntagmatic series of utterances very often has a foregrounding function. The precedence of love in the catalogue of virtues of Gal 5:22, definitely serves such a purpose. Nevertheless this evaluation of homosexuality in Paul is unfounded. First of all, one should note that in the only other reference to homosexuality in the undisputed Pauline letters, *viz.* 1 Cor 6:9, homosexuality does not top the list (cf. also 1 Tim 1:9–10). In some lists sexual immorality (πορνεία) is mentioned first (1 Cor 5:9–11; 6:9–10; Gal 5:19–21), but then it is used as a broad cover term. Homosexuality is not singled out as particularly evil. This insight is endorsed when we examine Rom 1:26–27 in more detail.

The key towards understanding the proper function of these homosexual references lies in the language of inversion which dominates Rom 1:18–32. The presence of inversion in this passage is universally recognised. However, its extent and implications should be further explored. The most obvious indication of inversion certainly is the three-fold appearance of the “exchange” word-group (ἀλλάσσω/καταλλάσσω: “they exchanged the glory of the immortal God for the image of mortal man” (v. 23); “they exchanged the truth of God for a lie” (v. 25); “their women exchanged natural intercourse for the unnatural” (v. 26). The same idea is conveyed by formulations like “men who suppress the truth by their wickedness” (v. 18); “men abandoned natural intercourse with women and were consumed with passion for one another” (v. 27–cf. v. 26). In the same vein, the ample occurrence of the alpha privative indicates a (negatively eval-

¹³ C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, ICC (2 vols.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1977) 1.120–1.

¹⁴ K. Barth *Der Römerbrief* (4. Aufl.; Zollikon-Zürich: Kaiser, 1926) 26.

uated) reversal of expectations: ἀσέβεια, ἀδικία, ἀσύνετος, ἀκαθαρσία, ἀτιμάζεσθαι, ἀτιμία, ἀσχημοσύνη, ἀδόκιμος, ἀπειθής ἀσύνθετος, ἄστοργος, ἀνελεήμων. In addition, the whole section teems with antitheses: truth vs. wickedness (v. 18), knowing God, but not honouring him (v. 21); claiming to be wise, but becoming foolish (v. 22), truth of God vs. lie (v. 25), to worship and serve the creature, not the Creator (v. 25); natural intercourse vs. unnatural intercourse (v. 26), knowing the decree of God and nevertheless doing the opposite (v. 32).

These linguistic indicators point to an inversion at three interrelated levels: the cognitive, the reverential or devotional and the moral. Initially the focus is on the cognitive level. Obvious linguistic indicators are “men who suppress the truth” (v. 18), “can be known”, “is plain to them” “God made it plain to them” (v. 19), “has been clearly perceived”, “they are without excuse” (v. 20), “they knew God”, “they did not honour him as God or give thanks to him”, “they became futile in their thinking”, “their senseless minds were darkened” (v. 21), “claiming to be wise, they became foolish” (v. 22). We also have some anaphoric statements: “they exchanged the truth of God for a lie” (v. 25), “they did not see fit to acknowledge God” (v. 28).

From the cognitive, the focus shifts to the level of devotion or worship. This is clearly the case in v. 23, and also in the anaphoric statement in v. 25bc. These first two levels concern the overturning of man’s relationship to God. With regard to content, they overlap with the first two commandments. The moral level dominates in vv. 24–32, although, as has been indicated, certain retroflexes can be identified.

These three levels overlap to some extent. They should therefore not be separated pedantically. At the same time, there exists a causal relationship between them. The inversion at the cognitive level leads to the exchange of God for the idols (vv. 23, 25). In turn the inversion of man’s relationship to God leads to a radical moral inversion. However, between the second and the third levels, Paul brings in an additional perspective: three times God’s interim punitive reaction, consisting of a “handing over” of the nations to their own sinful passions, receives mention (vv. 24, 26, 28). Michael Williams rightly states: “There is an inevitability in the process of decay, but not one which leaves out the personal judgment of God.”¹⁵

¹⁵ M. Williams, “Romans 1: Entropy, Sexuality and Politics,” *Anvil* 10 (1993) 105–10.

The reference to homoeroticism should be understood within this context. Paul mentions homosexual behaviour first because it presents him with the most obvious and vivid illustration, on the moral level, of the process of inversion, the verb μετήλλαξαν (v. 26) linking up with the same verb-stem in vv. 23 and 25. This would also provide the reason why lesbianism is mentioned first. The usurpation of the male role by the active partner in a lesbian relationship is regarded as an even more glaring example of inversion than a male homosexual one. This interpretation is corroborated by the *T. Naph.* 3:2–5, where we find the same procedure. After describing how the Gentiles “changed their order” by forsaking God and turning to idols, homosexuality is mentioned because it is such a pertinent illustration of the inversive process. Thereupon follows the analogous sin of the Watchers:¹⁶

Sun and moon and stars change not their order; so do ye also change not the law of God in the disorderliness of your doings. The Gentiles went astray, and forsook the Lord, and changed their order, and obeyed stocks and stones, spirit of deceit. But ye shall not be so, my children, recognizing in the firmament, in the earth and in the sea, and in all created things, the Lord who made all things, that ye do not become as Sodom, which changed the order of nature. In like manner the Watchers also changed the order of their nature, whom the Lord cursed at the flood, on whose account He made the earth without inhabitants and fruitless.

It would therefore be unwarranted to regard homosexuality as *the* sin in Paul’s view. A hierarchy of sins, with homosexuality topping the list, is not intended. This is also clear from the list of vices following in vv. 29–31. Two principles of arrangement can be discerned here. Syntactically αὐτούς in v. 28 is first qualified by πεπληρωμένους followed by four abstract nouns in the dative (v. 29), then by μεστούς, followed by five abstract nouns in the genitive (v. 29), and finally by 12 nouns directly in the accusative (vv. 29–31). From the literary perspective, an arrangement by means of assonance and alliteration is quite obvious. The important point is that, at the semantic level, no trace of a hierarchy can be found. The purpose of the extended enumeration of vices is to foreground the absolute proliferation of sin, resulting from the distortion of man’s relationship to God. An

¹⁶ R. H. Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English* (2 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1913) 2.337.

additional argument would be that παρέδωκεν in v. 28, which leads to the list of vices in vv. 29–31, signifies a movement from the “religious” to the moral level which parallels the one portrayed in vv. 24 and 26. Also from this perspective, it becomes clear that homosexuality is not to be singled out as the most hideous sin.

James Miller¹⁷ has questioned the majority view that Rom 1:26 condemns female homosexuality. He draws attention to the fact that “unnatural” intercourse is here much less specified than is the case with male homosexuality in 1:27. Also, because female homosexuality received such scant attention in either classical or Jewish literature, one would have expected Paul to specify it more clearly if he had this kind of relationship in mind. In addition, the readers would have to deduce retrospectively from v. 27 that female homosexuality was intended. Therefore Miller proposes that Paul had unnatural sex between heterosexuals in mind, such as women insisting on anal or oral sex e.g. to prevent conception. However, the thorough study of Bernadette Brooten on female eroticism¹⁸ has established that there definitely was, at that stage already, an awareness of sexual love between women. Paul therefore accepts, without having to elaborate on it, that his readers would understand his reference. His elaboration in v. 27, then, would not be to explicate, but to draw attention to the seriousness of this “unnatural” sexual behaviour.

In Paul’s condemnation of homosexuality the terms “natural” and “unnatural” (φυσική and παρὰ φύσιν) play a crucial role. He uses the phrases κατὰ φύσιν and παρὰ φύσιν in Rom 11:24 (cf. 11:21). The wild olive and the cultivated olive each has its own peculiarities. The non-Jews are the branches which belong “according to their nature” to the wild olive tree, but they have been grafted “against their nature” onto a cultivated olive tree. Here φύσις refers to the genetic quality peculiar to a specific tree. When, in Rom 2:14, Paul refers to the heathen who obey the law “by nature” (φύσει), he is thinking of their innate capacity for recognising the will of God. In 1 Cor 11:14–15 he asks of the Corinthians: “Does not nature itself teach you that for a man to wear long hair is degrading to him,

¹⁷ J. E. Miller, “The Practices of Rom 1:26: Homosexual or Heterosexual,” *NovT* 37 (1995) 2–11.

¹⁸ B. J. Brooten, *Love between Women. Early Christian Responses to Female Homoeroticism* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago, 1996).

but if a woman has long hair, it is her pride?" Here "nature" indicates a specific social code which Paul and his contemporaries experienced as normal and to which they subscribed. We can therefore conclude that "nature" in Paul refers to a capacity, disposition or behavioral pattern which, being either inherently fixed or experienced as fixed (through social convention or otherwise), is regarded as normal, and may even be held as normative.

The application of the terms "natural" and "unnatural" in the condemnation of homosexuality has been traced from Plato to the Greco-Roman moralists, including Hellenistic Jewish sources, in particular Philo and Josephus.¹⁹ Paul would have derived his formulation from a popularisation of this theme, or from sources such as those just mentioned. However, his motivation for condemning homosexual activities as "unnatural" would only partly overlap with that of the moralists. We can accept that in Paul's view of what constituted "natural" sexual relations, three lines converged: The first would be what the normal, heterosexual majority of his readers, on account of their own sexual orientation, would regard as natural. The second would be what the conservatives in the Greco-Roman world, as represented by their moralists, would view as "natural". The third and decisive line would be conformity to the will of God. To understand this conjunction of motivations it is helpful to consult some analogous Jewish sources. According to *T. Naph.* 3:4–5 the people of Sodom "changed the order of their nature", and the heavenly beings did the same by copulating with the daughters of men. The readers are reminded that they recognised God in the whole of his creation. The natural and the creation order coincide. God's will as creator is expressed in the natural order. Philo, an early contemporary of Paul, was the writer par excellence who identified the natural order with the law of God.²⁰ Also Josephus upholds this identification. He writes: "The law recognises no sexual connections except for the natural (κατὰ φύσιν) union of man and wife, and that only for the procreation of children. But it abhors the intercourse of males with males, and punishes any who undertake such a thing with death."²¹

¹⁹ For convenient overviews, see J. B. DeYoung, "The Meaning of 'Nature' in Rom 1 and its Implications for Biblical Proscriptions of Homosexual Behavior," *JETS* 31 (1988) 430–7; Hays, "Relations Natural and Unnatural" 192–4.

²⁰ H. Köster, "φύσις, κτλ," *TWNT* 9.261–3.

²¹ Josephus, *Contra Apionem* 2.199. I used Hays's emendation of the Loeb translation, "Relations Natural and Unnatural" 193.

In both these writers it would be wrong to distinguish God's will, as expressed in his creation, from his will as expressed in the law.²² The Creator and the Lawgiver is one and the same person.

Although it cannot be proved that Paul's indictment of homosexuality links up directly with certain Jewish Hellenistic sources, as presented above, it should be clear that he also saw homosexuality as a perversion of God's will, as expressed in his order of creation, that is as an overturning of the God-willed man-woman relationship depicted in Genesis. Paul's language in this context contains strong echoes of the creation story.²³ The references to "creation" and God's "works" (v. 20), to the serving of the creature rather than the Creator (v. 25), the negative echo to the image of God (v. 23; cf. Gen 1:26–27), the reference to "birds", "animals" and "reptiles" (v. 23; cf. LXX Gen 1:21–25) and to "female" and "male" (θῆλυς and ἄρσεν—vv. 26–27; cf. LXX Gen 1:27) all point in this direction. We have to conclude, then, that for Paul the decisive indication of what would be "natural" is the man-woman relationship as ordained by God, the Creator. "Unnatural" would then be any distortion of this model. Therefore, the term "unnatural" is here, at the deepest level, a theological judgement. For Paul nature cannot be detached from God.²⁴

According to Boswell, who maintains that Rom 1:26–27 does not contain a condemnation of homosexuality, the preposition *παρά* in the phrase *παρά φύσιν* should not be understood in the sense of "against", but as meaning "more than, in excess of". Thus the phrase would mean "beyond nature".²⁵ However, this interpretation is completely contradicted by the fact that *κατὰ φύσιν* and *παρά φύσιν* form a standard antithetical pair in all relevant Greek sources. In addition, Boswell totally ignores the overall texture of Paul's argument. As in the case of homosexuality, the vice catalogue of vv. 29–31 also serves to illustrate the moral depravity of man as a result

²² Contra e.g. D. Good, "The New Testament and Homosexuality: Are we getting anywhere?" *RSR* 26 (2000) 310.

²³ Hays, "Relations Natural and Unnatural," 191; K. Holter, "A Note on the Old Testament Background of Rom 1,23–27," *Biblische Notizen* 69 (1993) 21–23; D. E. Malick, "The Condemnation of Homosexuality in Rom 1:26–27," *BSac* 150 (1993) 332–3; Ulrich W. Mauser, "Creation and Human Sexuality in the New Testament," *Biblical Ethics and Homosexuality*, ed. R. L. Brawley (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1996) 11–12; T. R. Schreiner, *Romans*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, 6 (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998) 95.

²⁴ Köster, "φύσις, κτλ.," 267; Käsemann, *An die Römer* 44.

²⁵ Boswell, "Christianity" 111–12.

of his distorted relationship to God. If the homosexuality referred to in 1:26–27 would not be sinful according to Paul, why would the phenomena mentioned in vv. 29–31 be?

This brings us to the question: What kind of homosexual misbehaviour is Paul referring to? The argument that Paul had male-male and female-female cult prostitution in mind because he spoke of the worship of idols in the previous verses, does not hold water. The following points should be kept in mind: (1) Paul's condemnation in Rom 1:26–27 is formulated in such a general way that it will go against the drift of the text to limit his argument to the cultic sphere. (2) Paul's criticism of the homosexual practices envisaged in Rom 1:26–27 is that they are "against nature". Why would he have regarded these practices, when taking place within the cultic framework, as against nature, but outside of it as according to nature? (3) Already Plato, but also the Greek moralists, condemned all homosexual practices. Definitely not all of these occurred within the cultic sphere. Musonius Rufus, a contemporary of Paul, wrote as follows (Fragment 12): "But of all sexual relations those involving adultery are most unlawful, and no more tolerable are those of men with men, because it is a monstrous thing and contrary to nature."²⁶ This condemnation is absolute. There is no limitation to cultic practices. Surely it would be unwarranted to suspect Paul of being morally less sensitive than the moralists. (4) Without any textual markers to that effect it would be arbitrary to limit the sins of Rom 1:26–27 to the cultic terrain, but not those of Rom 1:29–31. (5) The works of Dover²⁷ and Brooten²⁸ (who rectifies Dover to some extent), have shown that male as well as female homosexuality was a well-known phenomenon in the Graeco-Roman world and that it was definitely not limited to cultic practices. In morally sensitive circles it was regarded as an indication of social decadence. This is what Paul aims at. He wants to illustrate the decline of heathen morality as a result of their breach with God.

Boswell holds that Rom 1:26–27 deals with heterosexuals who are practising same-sex. He argues that the verbs "exchange" and "give up" refer to a conscious change of conduct which would be applic-

²⁶ See A. J. Malherbe, *Moral Exhortation. A Greco-Roman Sourcebook* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986) 153.

²⁷ K. J. Dover, *Greek Homosexuality* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1978).

²⁸ Brooten, *Love between Women*.

able only to heterosexuals.²⁹ However, it is clear that he is reading too much into these verbs.³⁰ On the other hand, this would not imply that Paul is excluding heterosexuals who engage in homosexual practices. Only Boswell's restriction to heterosexuals should be rejected. Also proposals that Paul refers to pederasty is arbitrary. His condemnation is comprehensive and absolute. We should not allow our sympathy with the homosexually oriented to narrow down the scope of his statement. Neither should we try to save Paul's reputation or the authority of Scripture in this way. Paul is arguing in universal categories, and he condemns homosexual desire and actions as morally wrong, whether they are committed by homosexuals or heterosexuals, by adults or minors.

Before we attend to the hermeneutical problem, two concluding observations regarding Paul's position are in order: (1) As we have seen, he regards homosexuality in a serious light, but he does not single it out as the sin, or as more serious than the sins mentioned in the following catalogue of vices. The fundamental sin in his view is man's refusal to honour and worship God. If it is true that all Christians are guilty, in some way or other, of bereaving God of his honour, it places homosexuality, as Paul views it, into a different perspective. This is endorsed by his statement in Rom 2:1, when he accuses his self-righteous conversational partner that he is guilty of "doing the very same things". Paul in effect reminds us that we all would have to plead guilty before God and that we should only refer to the sins of others in a spirit of the deepest humility.

(2) It has correctly been said that it would be an anachronism to argue that Paul excluded persons with a fixed or constitutional homosexual orientation.³¹ Nevertheless, a marginal note should be added to the statement of Furnish that the ancient writers operated "without the vaguest conception of what we have learned to call 'sexual orientation'".³² Already the effeminate appearance of some of the *μαλακοί* or *ἐρώμενοι* would point in a different direction. Also, several of the astrological and medical texts which Bernadette Brooten

²⁹ Boswell, "Christianity" 12–13.

³⁰ Hays ("Relations natural and unnatural," 201), calls Boswell's position "a textbook case of 'eisegesis'."

³¹ E.g., by V. P. Furnish, *The Moral Teaching of Paul* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1979) 66; Hays, "Relations Natural and Unnatural" 200.

³² Furnish, *Moral Teaching* 200.

presents in her thorough investigation into female homoeroticism, show traces of a rudimentary awareness, at least in some circles, of a fixed or relatively fixed homosexual orientation, although this condition was ascribed to the influence of the stars or to congenital disease.³³ Brooten even surmises that Paul may have been aware of this condition, but would have viewed it, like some medical teachers, “as an inherited disease, brought on by ‘shameful custom’, or like the astrologers, as innate, but nevertheless unnatural.”³⁴ We are often inclined to underestimate the perceptiveness and insight of the ancients. However, until more substantial evidence is presented, Brooten’s conjecture cannot enjoy higher status than a mere possibility. At any rate, the scientific understanding of constitutional homosexuality was, at that stage—and for many centuries thereafter—so rudimentary that a sympathetic insight into its seriousness and complicated nature would not have been part of the conceptual framework even of the well-informed.

3. *Hermeneutical Observations and Some Ethical Suggestions*

Whether Paul’s position on homosexual practices should function as normative in our modern situation will depend on the question of authority in Christian ethics. Richard Hays distinguishes between four possible sources of authority: Scripture, tradition, reason and experience.³⁵ For Christians respecting the authority of Scripture, the Bible will certainly be the decisive criterion. However, the problem lies with the way the authority of the Bible should function in problematic instances. At the same time we should realise, not only that these sources, or at least some of them, sometimes overlap, but also that they influence one another in various ways. Scripture and Judaeo-Christian tradition coincide to a considerable extent. Reason and experience—and here we should include scientific development—have often forced the church to re-examine and review its understanding of Scripture. Our interpretation and evaluation of the biblical world-view and Genesis 1–2 are two clear examples. In the case of

³³ Brooten, *Love between Women* 115–86.

³⁴ Brooten, *Love between Women* 242–3.

³⁵ Hays, “Relations Natural and Unnatural” 207–9.

slavery, the church eventually had to redefine its position at a much deeper level than mere biblical references to slaves and slavery.

Regarding homosexuality, the weight and comprehensive character of Paul's pronouncements, and especially Rom 1:26–27, cannot be ignored. In addition, it can hardly be doubted that the Pauline position is embedded within the mainstream Judaeo-Christian tradition which runs from the Old Testament, through the intertestamental period, and into the later rabbinic³⁶ and Christian³⁷ periods. At the same time it should be kept in mind that, as has been indicated above, Paul did not stigmatise homosexual expression as the sin or as more offensive than other sins.

On the other hand, research into homosexual orientation has indicated the complexities of this phenomenon, not only with regard to its causes, but also regarding its manifestations. The latter can cover a broad spectrum, ranging from pseudo-homosexual fixation to kernel fixation. The main causes that have already been identified, are genetic-biological, hormonal, psychological and social, or a combination of these.³⁸

What is of decisive importance for Christian ethics, is that there are many homosexually oriented Christians who have experienced that, despite all their remorse, prayers and strenuous efforts, and despite intensive psychiatric treatment, their sexual orientation has remained the same. Although positive reports are certainly not lacking,³⁹ Christian families, pastoral advisors, psychologists and psychiatrists tell heart-breaking stories about sensitive, committed Christians who became convinced that they had to live with their situation.⁴⁰ These Christians have not inverted their God-relationship in Paul's terms. They love and honour him as their God. They believe in Jesus Christ as their Saviour. But they experience, as far as their own sexual orientation is concerned, that what is "natural" to them, is "unnatural" in biblical terms.

³⁶ Cf. P. Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch* (3 vols.; 2. Aufl.; München: Beck, 1964) 3.68–73.

³⁷ Cf. e.g., Hays, "Relations natural and unnatural" 208.

³⁸ I wish to thank Professor Murray Jansön for enlightening discussions in this regard.

³⁹ See e.g. J. F. Harvey, *The Truth about Homosexuality. The Cry of the Faithful* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1996).

⁴⁰ See in this regard P. Germond and S. de Gruchy (eds.), *Strangers in the Household of God: Homosexuality and Christian Faith in South Africa* (Cape Town-Johannesburg:

Ethically, this boils down to a conflict situation. On the one hand the biblical position should be respected. On the other hand our modern insights into the complexities of constitutional homosexuality compels the church to have the deepest compassion with, and understanding for, fellow-Christians in this situation. This dialectical tension should not be slackened in either direction. The biblical position should not be watered down by eisegesis or any other exegetical stratagem. Neither should it be enforced at the cost of the love commandment. Homosexuality should not be whitewashed. It should also not be “celebrated”.⁴¹ We should not turn the biblical “no” into an unqualified “yes”. At the same time its complexities should not be oversimplified, e g by attributing guilt to those who are not responsible for their condition, and who would do everything to be different. We should realise that in a dialectical situation such as this there are no straightforward, absolute solutions, only relative, approximate ones; and these would vary according to different individual situations. We live in a complicated, often inverted and even perverted human world—after September 11, 2001 not many would gainsay that. Therefore quick and easy answers are not necessarily the right ones.

We can start with those aspects about which there should be no uncertainty. Without doubt all homosexual promiscuity, like heterosexual promiscuity, should be radically rejected. Naturally, also, homosexual Christians should be welcomed in the church and encouraged to contribute to the upbuilding of the church by means of their special gifts. They should also be encouraged to come out into the open and seek pastoral and professional guidance. We should not underestimate the changing and healing power of God.⁴² However, the really difficult problems lie with those who have accepted that their condition is irreversible. Some of them may come to the conviction, as so many incognito fellow Christians before them, that, with a view to the censures of Scripture, they should exercise abstinence. These should be supported in every way possible. There will also be those who, experiencing the longing to love and be loved, and realising their own moral frailty, may decide on a one-to-one, com-

Philip, 1997), and especially P. W. Egerton, “One Family’s Story,” *Homosexuality and Christian Faith. Questions of Conscience for the Churches*, ed. W. Wink (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999) 23–30.

⁴¹ Egerton, “One Family’s Story” 30.

⁴² Cf. Harvey, *The Truth about Homosexuality*.

mitted and permanent relationship. They should also be supported in every possible way.

Basically we should accept that, while upholding this dialectical tension, if a choice must be made between the biblical position on homosexuality and the love commandment—and such a choice is often inevitable—the latter must receive precedence. Bishop Egertson's conclusion should therefore be endorsed: "We would rather err on the side of helping hurting people than on the side of hurting helpless people."⁴³

⁴³ Egertson, "One Family's Story" 30.

DRAWING THE LINE: PAUL ON IDOL FOOD AND IDOLATRY IN 1 COR 8:1–11:1

Karl-Gustav Sandelin

1. *The Problem*

Biblical exegesis, like any other study of texts, is conditioned by the hermeneutical circle, viz. a new interpretation of the details of a text will affect the understanding of the larger context, an impact which in turn may lead to new perspectives on the details. Consequently the interpretation of a text as a whole or of some of its details normally undergoes minor or major changes in the interpreter's mind as time passes. Therefore, if we consider the process from an optimistic point of view, the hermeneutical circle may be described as a spiral: the understanding moves from a less to a more appropriate interpretation of the text. In this article I shall pursue a question concerning which I have arrived at a new view of certain details in a text. In a couple of articles I have agreed with many other modern commentators on 1 Cor 8:1–11:1, that "it is probable that there existed people in the Christian community of Corinth who attended pagan religious occasions". In reaction to this practice Paul in 1 Cor 10:14, 20–21 "categorically seems to forbid participation at pagan ritual performances".¹ This view is shared by Peder Borgen in an important article on the participation of Jews and Christians in pagan cults.²

I had the great privilege of membership in an Inter-Scandinavian project on Hellenistic Judaism and Early Christianity, a research group led by Professor Peder Borgen in the years 1988–1993, which

¹ K.-G. Sandelin, "'Do Not Be Idolaters!' (1 Cor 10:7)", *Texts and Contexts. Biblical Texts in Their Textual and Situational Contexts. Essays in Honor of Lars Hartman*, ed. Tord Fornberg and David Hellholm (Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 1995) 259. Cf. K.-G. Sandelin, "The Danger of Idolatry According to Philo of Alexandria", *Temenos* 27 (1991) 143.

² Peder Borgen, "'Yes,' 'No,' 'How Far?': The Participation of Jews and Christians in Pagan Cults", *Paul in his Hellenistic Context*, ed. Troels Engberg-Pedersen (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995) 40–41, 47–48.

among other contributions, resulted in the articles just mentioned. Our discussions were intense, inspiring and fruitful. But now I think we may have been mistaken on certain points regarding the situation in Corinth and Paul's reaction to it. My doubts spring from consideration of two Pauline utterances in the passage in question. In 1 Cor 8:10, Paul uses a *conditional sentence* to address a person who in the future may recline in a place he calls an εἰδωλεῖον. In 1 Cor 10:7 and 14, Paul uses the *imperative* to forbid the Corinthians to become idolaters and orders them to flee idolatry. Can any firm conclusion be based on these utterances concerning the actual behavior of the Corinthians? I now doubt this because of the grammatical structure of the sentences. It may not be customary in a *Festschrift* to present opinions which differ from those held by the honoree, but in this case I shall indulge in some self-criticism as well. It goes without saying that nothing would be more pleasant for me than to be persuaded to return to my former position by Professor Borgen himself.

It seems appropriate to start with a short overview of the text. In 1 Cor 8 Paul explicitly states that he intends to discuss food offered to idols (εἰδωλόθυστα, vv. 1, 4). This undoubtedly implies meat (v. 13) although other kinds of food may be involved as well. Paul makes a serious suggestion to those who, like him, know that idols are of no account (v. 4) and therefore have the right (ἐξουσία) to eat pagan sacrificial meat (v. 9). In an indirect form he admonishes them to abstain from their right in order not to become a stumbling block to those who have a weak conscience (vv. 9–13). The latter still eat this meat as if it were food offered to idols, which will have disastrous consequences for them. This occurs if the weak see somebody possessing knowledge reclining in an εἰδωλεῖον. The individual with a weak conscience may be led to eat idol food (vv. 7, 10–11). 1 Cor 9 does not seem to take up the themes of idolatrous food, or of idolatry. Paul, however, presents himself as one who is entitled to sustenance from his congregations, but who waives his right (ἐξουσία, v. 12). There is therefore a clear connection between ch. 8 and ch. 9. In ch. 10 by referring to the example of the fathers in the desert (vv. 1–13) Paul gives unconditional commands to avoid idolatry (vv. 7, 14), and in contrasting the Christian eucharistic meal with pagan worship states that the Christians cannot participate in both (vv. 15–22). In ch. 10 the eating of food offered to the idols is mentioned implicitly in v. 7b and explicitly in vv. 19–21. After a couple of

short general statements (vv. 23–24) Paul takes up two specific cases which may imply eating of sacrificial meat: food sold in the marketplace, and food served at a meal offered by an unbeliever (vv. 25–30). In the latter case the Christian guest is allowed to eat everything served as long as nobody points out that the food has been offered in a temple (ἱερόθυτον). Paul here clearly returns to the questions he raised in ch. 8, i.e. food offered to idols. Some general admonitions are added at the end of the passage (1 Cor 10:31–11:1).

Before we enter the discussion a couple of general points should be mentioned. The understanding of Paul's answers to the questions concerning idolatry and idol food has depended to some extent on the character of the text of 1 Corinthians and especially of our passage. Does it consist of a correspondence between Paul and the Corinthians covering a period in which Paul modified his stand as a result of new information about the situation at Corinth?³ Or is it better understood as one continuous text from the very beginning? Some recent studies, among them the commentaries by W. Schrage and H. Merklein, have convinced me that the latter option is to be preferred.⁴

Further: in order to understand Paul's argument scholars have attempted to reconstruct the Corinthian situation. Some authors resorted to the use of literary material from other sources than the New Testament. W. Schmithals, as a representative of the "History of Religions-School", assumed Gnostic ideas determined the religious thought and behavior of one group of the Corinthian Christians.⁵ Some authors maintain that a more specific definition of the thought-world of the Corinthian "Gnostics" is impossible.⁶ Nevertheless R. Horsley offered

³ See G. Sellin, "Hauptprobleme des Ersten Korintherbriefes," *ANRW*, 2.25/4 (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1987) 2964–68, 2972–74.

⁴ Wolfgang Schrage, *Der Erste Brief an die Korinther*, 2. Teilband (1Kor 6,12–11,16), EKK (Zürich: Benziger Verlag; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1995) 212–215; Helmut Merklein, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther, Kapitel 5,1–11,1*, ÖTK (Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn; Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 2000) 164–168. See also M. Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1991) 15–17, 66–68, 129, and Anders Eriksson, *Traditions as Rhetorical Proof: Pauline Argumentation in 1 Corinthians*, ConBNT, 29 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1998) 148–173.

⁵ Walter Schmithals, *Die Gnosis in Korinth: Eine Untersuchung zu den Korintherbriefen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1969) 212–217.

⁶ E.g. H. Conzelmann, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1969) 29–30.

an alternative to the Gnostic theory: Paul argues against Hellenistic Jewish Wisdom tradition such as we can find in Philo from Alexandria.⁷ I regard attempts like those of Schmithals and Horsley as important because they widen the frame of reference within which texts are interpreted. The hermeneutical circle is in danger of becoming too constricted if we reconstruct Paul's opponents in Corinth on the basis of his letters alone, and then interpret Paul against the background of such a reconstruction.⁸ There is a risk of a circular argument. Of course the procedure of Schmithals and Horsley also has its disadvantages. It is not easy to determine the criteria concerning which texts in the Hellenistic world we should use in order to interpret New Testament texts. In this particular case I prefer the suggestion made by Horsley. In my doctoral dissertation I attempted to interpret 1 Cor 15 along similar lines.⁹ In this article I confine myself to Paul alone and make no attempt to reconstruct the general way of thought of those in Corinth who maintained that they had "knowledge."

The only information about the situation in the early Christian community at Corinth is mediated to us through Paul. In principle we must distinguish between what actually was going on, and what Paul thought was going on. How does he conceive of the situation concerning idol food in the community he has founded? Does he believe that some of the Corinthians actually have engaged in idol-worship by participating in sacrificial banquets in the temple precincts? Or does he just think that the Corinthians need some advice on how to handle food offered to idols? The answers to these questions will affect our understanding of how Paul attempts to influence Corinthian practice. What is forbidden and what is allowed, according to him? Where does Paul draw the line? The two basic questions I shall address here are the following: (1) Is it necessary to

⁷ R. A. Horsley, "Gnosis in Corinth: 1 Corinthians 8.1–6," *NTS*, 27 (1981) 32–51; see also R. A. Horsley, *1 Corinthians* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1998) 34–36, *et passim*.

⁸ See also the far-reaching exposé of the pagan religious situation in Greco-Roman Corinth in D. Newton, *Deity and Diet: The Dilemma of Sacrificial Food at Corinth* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998) 79–257.

⁹ K.-G. Sandelin, *Die Auseinandersetzung mit der Weisheit in 1. Korinther 15* (Åbo: Åbo Akademi, 1976) 112–113. Cf. G. Sellin, *Der Streit um die Auferstehung der Toten: Eine religionsgeschichtliche und exegetische Untersuchung von 1. Korinther 15* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986) 72–209.

postulate that Paul in 1 Cor 8:1–11:1 reacts against actual attendance by Corinthian Christians at banquets in the temple precincts? (2) Where does Paul draw the line between acceptable and unacceptable Christian behavior concerning the consumption of food offered to idols?

2. *Did the Corinthians Participate in Banquets at εἰδωλεία or Pagan Cults?*

The passage 1 Cor 8:1–11:1 has attracted much scholarly attention in recent years. For instance, the literature cited in the recent commentaries by Schrage and Merklein is considerable.¹⁰ Here we must concentrate on certain aspects of the text and be very selective concerning modern commentators.

An important shift in the agenda of the discussion on 1 Cor 8:1–11:1 seems to be caused by the exegetical contributions of G. D. Fee. From his perspective the traditional view of the problem discussed in these chapters is marketplace idol food.¹¹ There are scholars who admit and even maintain that some Corinthians also participated in meals at pagan temples.¹² But according to Fee the important thing to understand is that Paul does not see the question of the eating of sacrificial food at the cultic meals in the pagan temples as a side issue but as the *main* issue in these chapters.¹³ No

¹⁰ Schrage, *Der Erste Brief an die Korinther*, 2. Teilband 211–12, 215, 251, 277–78, 317, 333, 360–61, 380–81, 429–30, 460; Merklein, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, Kapitel 5, 1–11, 1 162–163, 173–175, 206–208, 237–239, 254–256, 269.

¹¹ G. D. Fee, “εἰδωλόθυστα Once Again: An Interpretation of 1 Corinthians 8–10”, *Biblica*, 61 (1981) 172–175, and G. D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987) 358–362. As a typical example of the traditional view Fee mentions R. Kugelmann, “The First Letter to the Corinthians,” *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*, ed. R. E. Brown, J. A. Fitzmyer, and R. E. Murphy (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1968) 266 (I have been unable to consult this volume). Also holding this view is F. F. Bruce, *1 and 2 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; London: Epworth, 1971, repr. 1987) 78–79.

¹² Johannes Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief* (9. Aufl.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1910) 211; C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1968) 196.

¹³ A similar view is found in e.g. Merklein, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, Kapitel 5, 1–11, 1 168–171, and Newton, *Deity and Diet* 24 and 267. For a review of the debate see B. N. Fisk, “Eating Meat Offered to Idols: Corinthian Behavior and Pauline Response in 1 Corinthians 8–10,” *Trinity Journal*, N.S. 10 (1989) 50–54, and Eriksson, *Traditions as Rhetorical Proof* 138–142. The opinion criticized by Fee

doubt idolatry is a central issue in them. But is it really the main issue? If we understand the text as an argument we must also ask what Paul is arguing against.

Two viewpoints with respect to what Paul says in 1 Cor 8:1–11:1 seem to be fairly uncontroversial among scholars today: (1) Paul forbids the members of the Corinthian Christian community to participate in pagan, cultic occasions, implying ritual meals around an altar (1 Cor 10:1–22). (2) Paul allows Christians to consume food, probably including meat, which has been offered at sacrificial rituals, under certain circumstances, for instance when sold in the market and when its provenance is unknown (10:25–30).¹⁴

But it is debatable why Paul in 1 Cor 8:10 appears to accept that Corinthian Christians who have “knowledge” eat sacrificial meat ἐν εἰδωλείῳ, whereas in 1 Cor 10:1–22 he strictly forbids even them to participate in pagan rituals where offerings are brought to the idols and then consumed by the sharers of the meal.¹⁵ Two important solutions are proposed in the discussion today.

The first option defines the word εἰδωλεῖον in such a way that it is not identified with a temple proper, where sacrificial animals were slaughtered. Paul forbids the Christians to participate in a meal around the τράπεζα τῶν δαιμονίων, i.e. the altar of the demons, which would be idolatry (1 Cor 10:14, 21), but he accepts that the members of the Corinthian community are present at banquets in temple restaurants, which belong to the temple precincts, but are apart from the altar where the animals are sacrificed to the gods. The

is called the “majority view” by Fisk, whereas Eriksson refers to it as the “older scholarly consensus.”

¹⁴ Food sold at a *macellum* could have consisted of different kinds of meat, sacrificial and otherwise slaughtered, and also fish, poultry, vegetables and so on. See the recent study by D.-A. Koch, “‘Alles, was ἐν μακέλλῳ verkauft wird, eßt . . .’ Die *macella* von Pompeji, Gerasa und Korinth und ihre Bedeutung für die Auslegung von 1 Kor 10,25,” *ZNW* 90 (1999) 194–219, esp. 198 and 210. Koch relies heavily on C. De Ruyt, *Macellum. Marché alimentaire des Romains* (Louvain-la-Neuve: Publication d’Histoire de l’Art et d’Archéologie de l’Université Catholique de Louvain, 1983). The results arrived at by R. Saez Gonzalves differ from this picture. According to him the food sold in a so-called *macellum* in the east of the Roman Empire probably did not include meat at all! See R. Saez Gonzalvez, *El problema de las carnes inmoladas a los idolos y las soluciones propuestas (1 Cor 8, 1.4.7.10; 10.19; Act 15, 29; 21.25; Apoc. 2, 14.20): Un estudio teológico—biblico sobre la unidad y la diversidad en el Nuevo Testamento* (Rome: Pontifica Universitas Gregoriana, 1994) 81–82.

¹⁵ See Fisk, “Eating Meat Offered to Idols” 62.

only condition is that the weak brother is not offended.¹⁶ P. Borgen states: "... Paul in 1 Corinthians 8 and 10 drew the boundary line just at the pagan altar table when sacrifices were performed".¹⁷

This type of solution has certain weaknesses, however. To make a distinction between an εἰδωλεῖον and a temple with an altar does not seem possible. Temple precincts, as Merklein rightly observes, were regarded as sacred as the temple itself.¹⁸ Fisk attempts to avoid this difficulty by referring to the convivial character of many meals held in temple precincts: "At the one end was harmless fun and social convention; at the other end was raw idolatry".¹⁹ He refers to the broad documentation in the study of idol meat by W. L. Willis. But even Willis admits that, although the "focus is upon the worshippers and their association and pleasure," still the "presence of the god(s) is assumed".²⁰ Even the word εἰδωλεῖον which Paul chooses suggests that he was aware of a close connection between the banquet-hall and the pagan cult. Further: if the Christian is himself expected to draw the line between the εἰδωλεῖον and the τράπεζα, or to distinguish between idolatrous and non-idolatrous meals on public occasions in the temple precincts, then such a solution also seems to leave the decision whether an occasion is idolatrous or not to the individual. In 1 Cor 10:14–22 Paul however does not leave any scope for personal decision.²¹ An idol's temple and an altar are socially sanctioned realities which cannot be judged as harmless in Paul's eyes.

¹⁶ Thus Conzelmann, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, 176; Fisk, "Eating Meat Offered to Idols" 62–68; Schrage, *Der Erste Brief an die Korinther*, 2. Teilband 262–263; P. Borgen, "'Yes,' 'No,' 'How Far?'" 51 and 56; and D. Horrell, "Theological Principle or Christological Praxis? Pauline Ethics in 1 Corinthians 8.1–11.1," *JSTOT* 67 (1997) 90–91, 100–101.

¹⁷ P. Borgen, "'Yes,' 'No,' 'How Far?'" 56.

¹⁸ Merklein, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, Kapitel 5, 1–11, 1 199, with further references. Cf. G. H. R. Horsley, *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity* (North Ryde: Macquarie University, 1981), 6; and Koch, "'Alles, was ἐν μακέλλῳ verkauft wird, eßt . . .'" 216.

¹⁹ Fisk, "Eating Meat Offered to Idols: Corinthian Behavior and Pauline Response in 1 Corinthians 8–10" 63; see Conzelmann, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther* 176.

²⁰ W. L. Willis, *Idol Meat in Corinth: The Pauline Argument in 1 Corinthians 8 and 10* (Chico, California, 1985) 56–61, esp. 61. Cf. also D. Newton, *Deity and Diet* 188, 212, 219, 225, 242, 246–248, 302–304, who points out that it is difficult to distinguish between the social and the religious side of pagan sacrificial banquets (242).

²¹ Koch, "'Alles, was ἐν μακέλλῳ verkauft wird, eßt . . .'" 216.

The other solution is that Christian participation in meals within temple precincts is acceptable only theoretically. Those who possess knowledge always have to reckon with the possibility of becoming a stumbling block to brethren with a weak conscience. Therefore Paul in 1 Cor 8 does not give them any other choice than to abstain from sacrificial food at such public occasions where idol food is consumed. Paul's differing approach in 1 Cor 8 and 1 Cor 10:1–22 is just a matter of rhetorical strategy. In ch. 8 Paul uses the conscience of the weak as an argument against their custom of eating sacrificial food in the temple. Considering the disastrous effects which the eating of sacrificial food has for these weak brethren those who have knowledge should themselves abstain from their legitimate right (ἐξουσία) to eat such food in an εἰδωλεῖον. In ch. 9 the Apostle then presents himself as an example of one who waives his legitimate rights. Later on, however, in ch. 10 he uses an argument from Christology and sacramentality instead: it is impossible for a Christian to share the table of Christ and the table of demons (vv. 16–21). The gathering around the altar of sacrifices is a manifestation of idolatry, which was a reason for the destruction of the fathers in the desert (vv. 1–14). Paul forbids attendance at gatherings in temple precincts without reservation.²²

The problem with this solution is that Paul appears to present not only the eating of sacrificial meat as a legitimate right, but also the partaking thereof in areas considered as sacred and closely associated with the temple proper (1 Cor 8:9–10). This is the legitimate ἐξουσία from which the Corinthians should abstain.²³ But I ask, with Fisk and following Schrage, whether it is possible in view of what Paul says in 1 Cor 10:1–22 that he should present such participation as an ἐξουσία, a “legitimate right?”²⁴

There are attempts to avoid this difficulty, however. According to Fee, Paul does not accept the claim of the Corinthians. The reason is that it involves not eating regular meals, but also eating at cultic

²² For this type of interpretation see Merklein, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther, Kapitel 5,1–11,1* 166, 196–201, 205, 217, 222, 225–227, 239–240, 248–249, 258. A similar approach is followed by Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* 359–360, 378, 387–391, and Newton, *Deity and Diet* 290–313; see also Sellin, “Hauptprobleme des Ersten Korintherbriefes” 2973.

²³ Merklein, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther, Kapitel 5,1–11,1* 169, 196–197; Newton, *Deity and Diet* 294–296.

²⁴ Fisk, “Eating Meat Offered to Idols” 60; Schrage, *Der Erste Brief an die Korinther, 2. Teilband* 264.

occasions.²⁵ But if the “right” according to the Corinthians consisted in the latter kind of cultic meals, why does not Paul make an explicit distinction in 1 Cor. 8 between a legitimate right and an illegitimate custom?

In a recent attempt to show that in 1 Corinthians Paul does not allow any consumption of idol meat A. T. Cheung maintained that his words concerning the ἐξουσία of the Corinthians are “clearly sarcastic”. Paul’s reference to his own behaviour when he declares that he abstains from his rights in 1 Cor 9 implies that the Corinthians should renounce idol food.²⁶ But if Paul does not see his apostolic ἐξουσία as imaginary, which he certainly does not, how is he able to use a word like ἐξουσία even sarcastically with regard to the Corinthians? They are asked to abstain from a “right” they do not actually have in contrast to Paul himself. In this case there is a serious flaw in Paul’s argument.

Both attempts to solve the problem inherent in the tension of Paul’s utterances in chapters 8 and 10 of 1 Corinthians take for granted that Corinthian Christians in some way or another participated in feasts which were held in pagan temple areas. Paul in his admonitions takes a stand against such behavior. But what if this premise is abandoned? If Christians did not participate in the said feasts then Paul does not take up a position against actual participation. He does not then need to decide what kind of actual Christian participation in banquets within temple precincts is acceptable and what kind is unacceptable. The tension between what Paul seems to accept as a legitimate right and what he condemns as idolatry also disappears. The problem which was to be solved no longer exists.

We have come to the point at which our first basic question should be answered: is it necessary to conclude from the Pauline text that Corinthian Christians took part in banquets which Paul describes as εἰδώλεια, or that they participated in some cult around a pagan altar? The theory that there were Corinthians who participated in meals at either temple restaurants, or at ceremonies where pagan sacrificial rites were performed as well, is based upon Paul’s utterance in 1 Cor 8:10 and his warnings against idolatry in 10:1–22,

²⁵ Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* 359–360, 385.

²⁶ A. T. Cheung, *Idol Food in Corinth: Jewish Background and Pauline Legacy* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999) 129–130, 140–141.

esp. vv. 7, 14 and 21.²⁷ I agree that Paul's attitude may result from his knowledge of the behavior of members of the Corinthian community. Nevertheless it is not logically correct to draw direct conclusions about the situation, and the events, in Corinth from the conditional clause in 8:10, or from clauses in the imperative in 10:7 and 14 unless other utterances in the texts warrant such conclusions.

An examination of the structure of 8:10 shows that it consists of a conditional clause with the particle *ἐάν* and the verb *ἴδῃ* (aorist subjunctive) and a main clause with the verb in the future passive. Nigel Turner takes this verse as an example of "a definite event as occurring only once in the future, and conceived as taking place before the time of the action of the main verb."²⁸ Normally conditional sentences in Greek do not state whether or not the condition is true, although its fulfillment may be expected by the speaker or may be seen as a subjective supposition or as a possibility.²⁹ There are two exceptions to this rule: in one of the cases the expression implies that the protasis is *not* true, and in the other a future condition implies a strong likelihood of fulfillment. But in such a conditional clause as we find in 8:10 it is not stated whether or not the condition will be fulfilled. Paul just presents a future case "distinctly and vividly".³⁰ This is of course true regarding not only the predicate, but also the object of the conditional clause.³¹ Thus, although 8:10 may reflect realities in Corinth no positive conclusion can be drawn concerning them.³² The sentence points to something which

²⁷ E.g. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* 359–362; Schrage, *Der Erste Brief an die Korinther*, 2. Teilband 213, 262–63; and Merklein, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, Kapitel 5, 1–11, 1 166, 169, 248, 258. These authors also refer to other scholars who hold the same opinion.

²⁸ Nigel Turner, *Syntax*, vol. 3 of J. H. Moulton, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1963) 114–115.

²⁹ From a grammatical point of view the following sentence by Schrage, *Der Erste Brief an die Korinther*, 2. Teilband 262, is wrong: "ἐάν charakterisiert den Fall als möglichen, aber nicht bloß als hypothetisch konstruierten." A conditional sentence is hypothetical by definition; see J. C. Hurd, *The Origin of I Corinthians* (New York: Seabury, 1965) 125.

³⁰ See W. W. Goodwin, *Greek Grammar*, rev. C. B. Gulick (New Rochelle: Caratzas Brothers, 1981) 294, 296, esp. 298, and E. Schwyzler, *Griechische Grammatik* (3 vols.; München: C. H. Beck, 1950) 2.684–686.

³¹ Against Fisk, "Eating Meat Offered to Idols: Corinthian Behavior and Pauline Response in 1 Corinthians 8–10" p. 61, n. 45 and Newton, *Deity and Diet* 297; see Goodwin, *Greek Grammar*, 294 (examples under III).

³² Against Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* 385; Schrage, *Der Erste Brief an*

may happen in the future, and therefore could be an expression of Paul's fears. Of those who maintain that Paul's words in 1 Cor 8:10 describe an actual reality in Corinth one could ask: Why would Paul describe a future possible event if something like it has already happened in Corinth? Corinthians with knowledge are assumed to have attended pagan banquets. This has become known to other members of the Corinthian congregation and caused some irritation among them. Now Paul warns them saying: "If somebody with a weak conscience happens to see you eating in an idol's temple . . . then he will be emboldened to eat . . ." Would the seeing in the future be much more harmful than the knowledge already possessed by everybody in the congregation concerning the participation in meals at the temples?

Paul's warnings, prohibitions and commands in 1 Cor 10:1–22 as well can be understood either as results of behavior regarded by him as idolatry and practiced by some Corinthians, or as his attempts to prevent an unacceptable future development within the Christian community. But it is wrong to say that Paul would not have felt obliged to forbid participation in pagan sacrificial meals if such had never occurred in Corinth.³³ A warning or a prohibition in advance may be uttered with exactly the same fervor as one formulated after an offence has already been committed.³⁴

Is there anything which would weigh the scales in favor of either option? Does Paul react to actual Christian participation in banquets within temple precincts in Corinth, or is it feasible that he does not, and has some other reason for introducing the theme of idolatry? I think there is one important argument which turns the scales against the first option. In 1 Cor 5:1–5 Paul takes up a case where a person has been "given to Satan" by him because of a sexual offence. He urges the Corinthians not to tolerate such offenders as members of the community (v. 2). Persons who have become idolaters should be treated likewise (1 Cor 5:10–11). In 1 Cor 6:9–10, Paul states that no idolater will possess the Kingdom of God. Now, if Paul had interpreted the Corinthian situation on the assumption that idolatry had actually occurred, it seems to me that he would have argued in a

die Korinther, 2. Teilband, 262; and Merklein, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, Kapitel 5, 1–11, 1 198.

³³ Against Merklein, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, Kapitel 5, 1–11, 1 200.

³⁴ Against Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* 359.

different way than in 1 Cor 8–10. Instead of presenting the obligation to abstain from eating sacrificial food and shun idolatry he would have urged the Corinthians to exclude the idolaters from the congregation.³⁵ One could of course follow Merklein and explain Paul's reasoning by distinguishing between two perspectives: participation in pagan rituals was not idolatry from the point of view of the Corinthians, whereas in Paul's opinion it was precisely.³⁶ But even in this case Paul ought to have argued differently, for instance by attributing the postulated Corinthian behavior to a misunderstanding.

In consequence of the reasoning presented above I think the first basic question in this paper, i.e., whether it is necessary to postulate that Paul in 1 Cor 8:1–11:1 reacts against actual attendance by Corinthian Christians at banquets in temple precincts, should be answered in the negative.

3. *The Line between Acceptable and Unacceptable Behavior*

We should now consider our second basic question: Where does Paul draw the line between acceptable and unacceptable Christian behavior concerning the consumption of food offered to idols? The answer depends on the answer to another question: i.e. what is the main issue in 1 Cor 8:1–11:1? I shall examine these questions on the basis of some assumptions which result from our preceding discussion. First, I assume that in 1 Cor 8:1–11:1, Paul does not react against actual attendance by Corinthian Christians at banquets in temple precincts. Secondly, I postulate that the legitimate right which Paul grants to those who have knowledge is not the right to eat food offered to idols in pagan temples. Paul forbids such behavior in ch. 10. The εἰδωλεῖον mentioned in 1 Cor 8:10 is not exempt because it is a part of the temple precinct. Thirdly, Paul seems to accept the eating of food offered to idols under certain conditions, namely, when it is sold in the marketplace and when it is served at a private meal by an unbeliever.

In trying to define the main issue in 1 Cor 8:1–11:1, it is essential to take Paul's initial words seriously: περὶ δὲ τῶν εἰδωλοθύτων

³⁵ Cf. P. D. Gooch, *Dangerous Food: 1 Corinthians 8–10 in Its Context* (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier, 1993) 67.

³⁶ Merklein, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther, Kapitel 5,1–11,1* 258.

(8:1). Paul not only starts with the problem of sacrificial food, but also takes up precisely this question at the end of his treatment (10:25–31) and refers to it several times in between (8:4, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13; 10:7, 19, 21). The meaning of εἰδωλόθῃτα should therefore not be restricted to “sacrificial food partaken in the idol temple,” as Fee would have it.³⁷ The meaning is broader. Idol meat may be sold in the market and offered at a private meal.³⁸ Thus the legitimate right which Paul mentions in 1 Cor 8:9 is to consume idol food, but not at banquets in temple precincts. Paul, however, allows the enjoyment of this legitimate right only under a certain condition. Those who have knowledge should not eat if they may thereby become a stumbling block to those who have a weak conscience. I suggest that Paul is chiefly concerned with the question of how a Christian should behave when confronted with food offered to idols, and that he introduces the theme of participation in idolatrous cultic activities in order to show why the eating of idol food is dangerous. Paul’s reason could be the Corinthians’ wish to know how to cope with such food. At the end of the passage Paul constructs a situation in which the eating of idol food may indeed be harmless but also unacceptable, i.e. when a Christian is a guest at a banquet served by an unbeliever (1 Cor 10:27–30). The preceding text, from 1 Cor. 8:1, onwards can be seen as a preparation for Paul’s instruction on how to behave in such a situation.³⁹

By using the first person plural in 1 Cor 8, Paul seems to present some of his ideas in a way suggesting that he shares them with those Corinthians who possess “knowledge” (verses 1, 4, 6 and 8). Moreover he mentions at least some aspects of this knowledge: The idols do not exist, they have no reality (8:4).⁴⁰ There is only one

³⁷ Fee, “Εἰδωλόθῃτα Once Again” 181.

³⁸ Cf. Fisk, “Eating Meat Offered to Idols” 59, and Cheung, *Idol Food in Corinth* 104–105. Fee is rightly criticized by Fisk (54–59), who notices that Fee does not distinguish between “meaning” and “referent” when he determines the meaning of the word (55–56).

³⁹ Cf. the comment of Cheung, *Idol Food in Corinth* 96: “There is no difficulty in the text that would prevent one from seeing Paul as arguing in two different—but compatible—ways against the eating of idol food in both 8.1–13 and 10.1–22. Abstinence for the sake of the weak and abstinence in order to avoid idolatry are not mutually exclusive arguments. On the contrary, they are mutually reinforcing in their prohibition of the consumption of idol food”.

⁴⁰ With Schrage, *Der Erste Brief an die Korinther*, 2. Teilband 236, and Merklein, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, Kapitel 5,1–11,1 183–84.

God, the Father, and one Lord, Jesus Christ (8:6). But Paul's statement that there are those in the community in Corinth who do not share this knowledge (8:7) is somewhat perplexing. It seems that there were Corinthian Christians who, in contrast to Paul and those in Corinth who possess knowledge, still believe that the idols have a real existence and that this affects the sacrificial food. Now, even Paul has implied that there are powers in the universe which he would call gods and lords (8:5, cf. 1 Cor 10: 20).⁴¹ Paul also declares that those who eat sacrificial food as if it were food offered to the idols become subject to a reality with negative consequences: their conscience or consciousness is defiled (8:7). Regardless of how we are to interpret the way in which Paul understands συνείδησις and how it operates according to him the Apostle obviously disapproves of the weak eating sacrificial food.⁴² Such behavior will lead to their destruction (8:11)!⁴³ In 1 Cor 8 Paul does not say why the eating of sacrificial food has such devastating effects on an individual with a weak συνείδησις. Does Paul offer us any clues to understand this? Indeed I think he does, although not until ch. 10. There the consequences of the sins in the desert, the most important of which was the meal around the golden calf, are described as the destruction of the Israelites (1 Cor 10:5–10, esp. 9 and 10: ἀπόλλυντο, ἀπόλονται). Therefore, I agree with those scholars who maintain that the danger of eating sacrificial food as if it were offered to the idols draws the person who eats into paganism and idolatry. According to P. Borgen such a person would "attempt a syncretistic fusion of Christianity and polytheistic worship".⁴⁴ According to Merklein he acts in a way which is incompatible with his Christian identity and relapses into his pagan identity.⁴⁵ This in turn has a fatal outcome.

Now Paul in 1 Cor 8 does not seem to hold out any negative consequences for those who have knowledge if they eat sacrificial food, except that they may become the reason why the weak suffer

⁴¹ Cf. Newton, *Deity and Diet* 362.

⁴² Today many authors seem highly appreciative of the monograph by H.-J. Eckstein, *Der Begriff Syneidesis bei Paulus*, WUNT, 2. Reihe 10 (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1983). Usually the word συνείδησις is translated "conscience." Horsley suggests "consciousness" instead; see R. A. Horsley, "Consciousness and Freedom among the Corinthians: 1 Corinthians 8–10", *CBQ* 40 (1978) 581.

⁴³ Cf. Conzelmann, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther* 177, n. 38.

⁴⁴ P. Borgen, "'Yes,' 'No,' 'How Far?'" 51.

⁴⁵ Merklein, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther, Kapitel 5, 1–11, 1* 201.

destruction. Prompted by the behavior of those who have knowledge the weak will invite their own destruction (8:10–11). Those who have knowledge will therefore become a stumbling block, causing the weak to fall (8:9, 13). Thus they sin against their brothers and hurt their weak συνείδησις (8:12). But Paul does not go on to say that this in turn leads to the condemnation of those who have knowledge! He does not do so even if the sin against the brother is a sin against Christ who died for the brother (8:11).⁴⁶

Does this interpretation of 1 Cor 8 imply that Paul in principle accepts the eating of sacrificial food provided one basic condition is fulfilled: that the one who eats does not see it as food offered to the idols? This would mean that the one who eats should ask himself: “Do I regard this as food offered to idols that exist, or do I not?” If he does, and therefore thinks an idol is nothing and that as a consequence idol food is nothing (8:4), then he is free to eat food sacrificed to the idols under one additional condition: that the weak brother is not caused to stumble. Is there no danger then that the one who has knowledge is attracted to idolatry himself and thus will suffer destruction? Now Paul actually reckons with the possibility that even those who have knowledge may become drawn into idolatry. In 1 Cor 8:10, he describes a situation which may become real in the future: a person with knowledge may be seen in an εἰδωλεῖον by a person with a weak conscience. Paul uses the thought in a context where the danger of becoming a stumbling block for the weak is at issue, and may have chosen the example just in order to demonstrate a case where the “right” to eat would become visible to all.⁴⁷ But in 1 Cor 8:10, he also hints at a situation which he describes more fully in 1 Cor 10:14–22.⁴⁸ There he does not exclude those who have knowledge from the danger of idolatry.⁴⁹ He addresses the Corinthian community as a whole, and clearly has occasions in mind where sacrificial meals are held (10:19–21). The Corinthians cannot

⁴⁶ Cf. however, the comment on 1 Cor 8:11 by Merklein, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther, Kapitel 5,1–11,1* 202: “Wenn Christus um des Bruders willen gestorben ist, dann schlägt . . . das Verderben, das der Bruder durch das Verhalten der Wissenden auf sich gezogen hat, auf diese zurück.”

⁴⁷ Cf. Sellin, “Hauptprobleme des Ersten Korintherbriefes,” 2973; Newton, *Deity and Diet* 298–301.

⁴⁸ Cf. Merklein, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther, Kapitel 5,1–11,1* 199–200.

⁴⁹ Correctly noted by Koch, “‘Alles, was ἐν μακέλλῳ verkauft wird, eßt . . .’” 216.

share in both the table of the Lord and the table of the demons (10:21).

For Paul there is at least one instance, however, in which the eating of food sacrificed to idols may be either harmless or unacceptable. This situation occurs if a Corinthian Christian accepts an invitation to a meal offered by an unbeliever (1 Cor 10:27–30). At such a meal the Christian is permitted to eat everything until somebody says of a dish that it is sacrificial food (ιερόθυτον). The situation now changes immediately and therefore the Christian should abstain from the food. As an argument for such a Christian response Paul presents the idea that the Corinthians should not eat for the sake of the individual who made the statement and for the sake of conscience. Opinions differ as to whether Paul thinks that the person making the statement is a pagan, a guest or the host, or if it is a weak Corinthian Christian.⁵⁰ In the latter case the same rule which we find in ch. 8 has to be applied. In order not to become a stumbling block for the weak, the one who has knowledge should refrain from eating.

The option that the words “this is sacrificial food” are uttered by a pagan seems preferable, however. This is strongly implied by Paul’s use of the word ιερόθυτον instead of εἰδωλόθυτον.⁵¹ The first word would fit well into the ideological universe of a pagan whereas both Corinthian Christians and Paul would probably prefer the second.⁵² According to the judgement of the συνείδησις of a pagan host a meal in his home could be understood as an extension of a sacrificial meal in a temple.⁵³ Considering my previous conclusions I think it unlikely that Paul here has in mind a private meal in a temple

⁵⁰ The latter option is preferred by Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief* 265; Fisk, “Eating Meat Offered to Idols” 67; and Schrage, *Der Erste Brief an die Korinther*, 2. Teilband 469–470 (with reservations).

⁵¹ Thus Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* 484; Borgen, “‘Yes,’ ‘No,’ ‘How Far?’” 52; Merklein, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, Kapitel 5, 1–11, 1 277; Newton, *Deity and Diet* 176–179.

⁵² Weiss, who admits this, still thinks the words may have been uttered by a Christian out of courtesy towards the pagan host. See Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief* 265. Cf. Fisk, “Eating Meat Offered to Idols: Corinthian Behavior and Pauline Response in 1 Corinthians 8–10” 67, n. 74.

⁵³ Borgen, “‘Yes,’ ‘No,’ ‘How Far?’: The Participation of Jews and Christians in Pagan cults” 52, writes: “His (sc. the polytheist’s) conscious and existential classification (συνείδησις) is that it is sacrificial food, which he understands to be part of polytheistic sacrificial ritual”. Cf. Merklein, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, Kapitel 5, 1–11, 1 279, who has a similar viewpoint.

precinct. But from Paul's perspective even a banquet in the home of a pagan would be a serious matter if it became obvious that idol meat is served. This is not because of the food as such (cf. 1 Cor 8:8; 10:9, 26, 30), but because of the pagan understanding of the meal as a part of the worship of the gods.⁵⁴ It is as if the table of the demons (1 Cor 10:21) extends into the dining-room of the pagan host. Therefore the conscious sharing of food offered to the idols at a meal would lead the Christian into idolatrous behavior regardless of whether he has a weak conscience or belongs to those who have knowledge. It is impossible to say whether or not Paul thinks that attendance at such meals has already taken place. Even here the case is presented in conditional form. No direct conclusions can therefore be drawn concerning actual events in Corinth.⁵⁵

When Paul permits the Corinthian Christians to eat everything bought in the marketplace it is possible that he makes a reservation even here. It may well be that the words of 1 Cor 10:28 apply also in this case.⁵⁶ A witness of the purchase may say that the food is sacrificial food and therefore the Christian ought perhaps to abstain from it.⁵⁷ But in this case the meal in a Christian's home would not have the same significance as a meal in a pagan's home. I therefore prefer to think that Paul does not intend to impose restrictions on the consumption of food bought in the marketplace. Paul does not see idol food as dangerous in itself (cf. 1 Cor 10:19).⁵⁸

Instead of seeing 1 Cor 10:25–31 as an appendix to a discussion of a more serious question—attendance of Christians at banquets in temple precincts—we have interpreted these verses as an integral part of the whole treatment of the question of food offered to the idols.⁵⁹ In short Paul's argument in 1 Cor 8:1–11:1 runs as follows:

⁵⁴ Cheung, *Idol Food in Corinth: Jewish Background and Pauline Legacy* 159, writes: "Since the informant has already drawn the food into the sphere of pagan worship, Christians must abstain at this point".

⁵⁵ Hurd, *The Origin of I Corinthians* 125.

⁵⁶ Willis, *Idol Meat in Corinth* 243–244, 260–261; Koch, "„Alles, was verkauft wird, eßt . . .”" 216–217; Cheung, *Idol Food in Corinth* 160.

⁵⁷ According to the interpretation of Willis, *Idol Meat in Corinth* 260, this is not because of the purchaser's own awareness of the meat's history, but because of the awareness of others, whereas according to Cheung, *Idol Food in Corinth* 157–160, it is the prehistory itself, if known, which makes consumption of idol meat impossible for a Christian in Paul's view.

⁵⁸ This view is not shared by Gooch, who finds some inconsistency in Paul's advice concerning food bought at market (*Dangerous Food* 85–88).

⁵⁹ In contrast to Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* 476–477.

Food offered to idols, while harmless as such, is dangerous because it may draw the consumer into idolatry. When such a risk exists the Christian should abstain from idol food.

Paul's position on an apparently unimportant question of how to handle food offered to idols may seem exaggerated. But there are clear signals in the text showing that for Paul the eating of idolatrous food even outside a temple precinct, for instance in the home of a pagan, is a serious matter because it involves the danger of idolatry. Therefore his admonitions not to become idolaters, and his stern warnings against idolatry are understandable even if actual idolatry on a large scale, e.g. in the form of attendance at pagan sacrificial banquets, had not yet taken place among Corinthian Christians.

So, where does Paul draw the line between acceptable and unacceptable Christian behavior concerning consumption of food offered to idols? At least all such banquets in temple precincts where food offered to idols is consumed appear to be prohibited for Christians in Paul's judgement. Thus the line is not drawn between the altar and less dangerous areas but around the whole temple precinct. But a Christian should also beware of other occasions at which the eating of sacrificial food could lead to idolatry, e.g. at a banquet in the home of a pagan friend. Even here a line should be drawn in order to shun idolatry. Paul does not adduce other examples. He probably allows scope for imagination and further reflection among the Corinthians.⁶⁰ But he also gives some criteria, the first of which is: "... whether you eat or drink, or whatever you are doing, do all for the honour of God" (1 Cor 10:31).

⁶⁰ Cf. the words of Newton, *Deity and Diet* 379, that Paul "was aware that the tangled web of valid individual interpretations effectively put any absolute or definitive 'solution' beyond his reach."

CHRIST: THE “END” OF THE LAW

Morna D. Hooker

Paul’s description of Christ as τέλος νόμου in Rom 10:4 is a key text in Pauline interpretation. Whole monographs have been written about this one verse alone.¹ Does Paul mean that Christ is “the end of the law” in the sense that he is its termination, or in the sense that he is its fulfilment or goal?

In fact, of course, English words do not necessarily correspond to Greek words—though in this case there is an ambiguity in the word “end” to match that in the Greek. The word τέλος here may well cover *both* our English senses: after all, if the goal—the purpose—of the law has been achieved, it is no longer “necessary.” Many commentators are thus happy to suggest that the phrase τέλος νόμου here conveys *both* meanings:² Christ is “the end of the law,” both because he fulfils its purpose *and* because he brings it to an end as a system by which to live. If we stress the alternative meaning, however—that Christ is the termination of the law—this does not necessarily imply that its *purpose* has been achieved.

So where is Paul’s emphasis? Does he think of Christ primarily as *completing* the law or as *competing* with it? For many centuries, the Lutheran influence dominating much exegesis meant that the law and Christ were seen as antithetical: Recent scholarship has tipped the balance in the opposite direction, and stressed Paul’s Jewish roots and his insistence that he was being faithful to the law (Rom 3:31)—and, even more important, that *God* was faithful to his promises (Rom 3:2–3; 9:6). But what was it that led Paul to affirm that *Christ* was the goal of the law? And if Paul does indeed see Christ as the goal of the law, what are the implications of that belief?

Let us begin by looking at the context in which this statement occurs. In Romans 9–11 Paul is endeavouring to explain God’s deal-

¹ E.g., R. Badenas, *Christ the End of the Law: Romans 10:4 in Pauline Perspective*, JSNTSup10 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1985).

² This is not to say (as H. Räisänen suggested, *Paul and the Law*, WUNT 29, Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1983) 53, that they are assuming that Paul could not make up his mind between the two meanings: the word τέλος embraces both.

ings with Israel. He insists that God's λόγος has not failed, and that the promises made to Abraham have been fulfilled. God's purposes have been worked out in extraordinary ways, but the result has been that he has made known "the riches of his glory" for those whom he has called—not from the Jews only, but also from the Gentiles (9:23). It is, of course, this inclusion of the Gentiles that has led Paul to rethink his attitude towards the law. He concludes (9:30–32): "What, then, are we to say? Gentiles, who did not strive after righteousness have obtained righteousness—that is, *righteousness* on the basis of faith. Whereas Israel, who strove after the law of righteousness, did not attain that law. Why not? Because she strove after it as though it could be fulfilled on the basis of works, not faith."

Paul does not say here quite what we expect him to say! In particular, what he says about Israel surprises us—and we should note that he is talking here about *Israel*, and not about individual Jews. Contrary to the translators, he does *not* say that Israel "did not succeed in *fulfilling* [the] law;"³ nor does he say that Israel was striving "for the righteousness that is based on the law"⁴ or that she "did not attain *righteousness*."⁵ He says that she did not attain *the law*. Why? The answer becomes clear when we turn back to the previous sentence. We might well have expected Paul to make a clear contrast with what he said in v. 30, and to write:

Gentiles, who do not strive after righteousness . . .
Israel, who does strive after righteousness. . . .

In fact, however, he spoke of Israel striving after a *law* of righteousness: it is this "law of righteousness" that Israel has failed to attain. But is this νόμος δικαιοσύνης simply the equivalent of the δικαιοσύνη ἐκ νόμου of 10:4? I suggest not. For here, already, in Romans 9, we have the idea of two contrasted goals. The goal for which Gentiles were *not* striving but which they nevertheless reached—was *righteousness*. The goal for which *Israel* was striving was *the law*

Räisänen acknowledged that this was in fact possible in the second edition of his book (1987).

³ NRSV; cf. NJB.

⁴ RSV; cf. JB.

⁵ F. F. Bruce, *Romans*, New Century Bible Commentary (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1989) 138. P. W. Schmiedel's suggested emendation of the text is noted in the margin of the Nestle-Aland text.

itself—the law whose own goal was, indeed, righteousness. In striving to fulfil it, however, Israel lost sight of the law's purpose: she treated it as an end in itself instead of pursuing its goal—righteousness. Since she did not attain the law, there is no need to explain that she did not attain righteousness either. Her mistake was to pursue the law as though it could be achieved on the principle of works, and not through faith (v. 32). Paul's accusation, then, is not simply that Israel did not attain righteousness, but that she pursued the wrong goal, which meant that inevitably she misunderstood the role of the law.

What Paul says here is consistent with what he said in Romans 7, where he described the law as ἅγιος and πνευματικός (7:12,14), and the commandment as δικαία καὶ ἀγαθή. The law is God's law (7:22,25) but is unable to do what it promised because of the weakness of the flesh (8:3), which has come under the power of the law of sin and death (7:23; 8:2). But for the contrast between the principles of "works" and "faith" we have to go back to 3:19–4:6. The law itself, we are told there, supports Paul's assertion that "no one will be 'rightwised' in God's sight *by the works of the law*," while both law and prophets witness to the fact that "God's righteousness has been revealed to all who believe" (3:19–22). The νόμος which is τῶν ἔργων leads to boasting, but the νόμος which is πίστεως excludes boasting (v. 27). Paul appears to be opposing two interpretations of the Torah, one of which sees it as focused on "works," the other as witnessing to faith. When the Torah is understood in terms of "works" it leads to boasting, not to righteousness, which comes only by faith (v. 28). We have here the same contrast that we find in 9:31a. The contrast is not between *law* and faith, but between two principles set out *in* the law—"works" (v. 20) and "faith" (vv. 21–2). Turning to Abraham in chapter 4, Paul maintains that he embodies this principle that δικαιοσύνη comes thorough πίστις and not through ἔργων, and the evidence is found in scripture in Genesis 15, backed up by Psalm 31 (32), a psalm attributed to David.

In Romans 9, also, Paul backs up his argument with a quotation from scripture—here a mixed quotation from Isa 28:16 and 8:14 about a stone that leads to stumbling. In Isaiah 8, the stone is God himself, who nevertheless becomes a rock that causes Israel to stumble. In Isaiah 28, the rock is laid by God in Sion as a cornerstone and sure foundation: its significance is unclear, although here, too, it may symbolize the presence of Yahweh himself, on whom the new spiritual temple—the new society of God's people—depends.

Or perhaps the foundation of this new community is the trust that Israel has in God. The LXX translation makes this trust more specific—it is ἐπ' αὐτῷ⁶—while the targum of Isaiah 28 understands the stone as referring to the Messiah. In Romans the stone, which is laid by God, is assumed by almost all commentators to refer to Christ—an interpretation that is supported by the christological interpretation of the two Isaiah texts in 1 Peter 2:4–8.⁷ The final line of the quotation is repeated in Rom 10:11, where αὐτῷ appears to refer to Christ; the alternative possibility that it might refer to God himself in 10:11 seems to be excluded by the confession in 10:9 that “Jesus is Lord”—the title that is central to the argument in 10:11–17—and it is presumably “the Lord” who is referred to in the term αὐτῷ (see vv. 12–13). The question therefore arises as to whether the clear christological meaning of the phrase ἐπ' αὐτῷ in Rom 10:11 determines the interpretation of the αὐτῷ in 9:33. Does the αὐτῷ in 9:33 also refer to Christ, or to something or someone else?

Furthermore, if this first αὐτῷ does refer to Christ, does this settle the meaning of the stone as well? Are we to conclude that the “rock” over which Israel has stumbled is also Christ? Is Paul affirming here that Israel’s problem is that she has failed to believe in him? The majority of commentators accept this interpretation, but the possibility that the stumbling-block is the law, supported by some scholars,⁸ should not be too easily dismissed. It should be noted, after all, that Christ has not been mentioned since 9:1–5, and that the two subjects under discussion in Rom 9:30–31 are the law and righteousness. Moreover, what Paul has just stated is that Israel has misunderstood the function of the law. Perhaps, then, the stumbling-block over which Israel has fallen is the law. This interpretation of the “rock” as symbolizing the law finds some support in the structure of the mixed quotation from Isaiah, which inserts a phrase from Isa 8:14 into a framework drawn from Isa 28:16. The former is much closer to the Hebrew than to the LXX, which expands the text,

⁶ These words are missing in B.

⁷ 1 Peter interprets both Isa. 8:14 and 28:16 (together with Ps. 117 (118):22) christologically.

⁸ So C. K. Barrett, “Romans 9.30–10.21: Fall and responsibility of Israel,” in *Die Israelfrage nach Rom 9–11*, ed. Lorenzo De Lorenzi (Rome: Abbey of St Paul Without the Wall, 1977) 99–130; also *The Epistle to the Romans* (2nd ed.; London: A. & C. Black, 1991) *in loc.* Cf. Paul W. Meyer, “Romans 10:4 and the End of the Law,” *The Divine Helmsman* (New York: Ktav, 1980) 59–78.

emphasizing that to those who are faithful to him, God is a sanctuary rather than a stumbling-block. The words from Isa 28:16, on the other hand, appear to be drawn from the LXX text, though omitting the positive description of the stone as a cornerstone that has been tested and is sure.⁹ The positive descriptions of the stone present in both LXX passages are thus ignored, and the emphasis is on the stone as a cause of stumbling. In contrast to this negative picture, the final line from Isaiah 28 speaks of “believing in it/him.”

But the reason that a stone causes one to stumble is normally that it is hidden from view—hardly true of the law. The metaphor suggests rather something obscure, which appears here to be the fact that the law could not be attained by works, and that the righteousness promised in the law came only through faith. It was this, says Paul, that Israel had failed to grasp, even though it is set out in the law itself (3:19–22). In other words, she has tripped up because she has misunderstood the law and been unaware of its true significance. The law promises that those who have faith will not be ashamed. But in whom or what should they believe? And who or what is the true significance of the law? The ambiguity in the quotation in v. 33 reminds us that the answer is still hidden from Israel. It will be spelt out in the next paragraph, where Christ is revealed as the “purpose” or “goal” of the law, and where the promise that those who believe ἐν’ αὐτῷ clearly refers to him.

The chiasmic structure of vv. 30–33 supports the suggestion that what has caused Israel to stumble is their understanding of the law:

- A Gentiles, who did not pursue *righteousness*, nevertheless attained it on the basis of faith (v. 30).
- B Israel, who pursued the *law* of righteousness, did not attain the law—because she did so “as though” its basis was works, not faith (vv. 30–31).
[So what misled her? Her misunderstanding of the law and its goal—i.e. righteousness.]
- B' She tripped over the stone of stumbling, as scripture testifies.
- A' Scripture also affirms that those who have faith will not be ashamed.

⁹ Contrast the way in which this text is used in 1 Pet 2:6, where the stone is Christ.

Seen in this context, the most natural explanation of the "stone of stumbling" is that it represents the law itself—or rather, *the true significance of the law*, which was hidden from Israel. Her misunderstanding of the law led her to pursue it as though the righteousness it demanded were based on works. In fact, this righteousness was based on faith. As we have seen, there are echoes here of what Paul wrote in 3:27 about a "law of works" and a "law of faith." The law's true purpose was to witness to the righteousness freely offered to those who believe, and Israel stumbled because she did not realize that the law offered righteousness on the basis of faith. As we read on, we discover that the proper understanding of the law—its true goal—is Christ, and that righteousness is based on faith in him. It would seem, then, that the ambiguous αὐτῷ in v. 33 must be understood as Christ—the one in whom the *Gentiles* (v. 30) have believed.

So far, however, Christ has not been specifically mentioned in the argument that began at 9:6. Nevertheless, no-one who has read Paul's argument in Romans 1–8 can doubt that the references to πίστις and δικαιοσύνη are pointing towards him. The theme of Paul's epistle is the gospel, in which "the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith" as Hab 2:4 testifies (Rom 1:17)—and this gospel "concerns God's Son . . . Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom 1:3–4).

In 10:1, Paul speaks of the zeal that his fellow-countrymen have for God—a zeal which, according to Phil 3:6, he himself shared. This zeal is misinformed, however, since it is not κατ' ἐπίγνωσις (v. 2): "Being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, they have not submitted to the righteousness of God (v. 3). The same contrast reappears in Phil 3:9, where Paul's own righteousness is said to be ἐκ νόμου, and God's is based ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει: Rom 10:3 thus restates the contrast already set out in 9:30–1. δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ is a key term in Romans, where it occurs eight times.¹⁰ But what is this righteousness of God"? We know from earlier statements in the epistle that it is revealed in the gospel (1:17), that it is attested to by the law and prophets (3:21), and that it comes to all who believe διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (3:22)—though the meaning of this last phrase is, of course, disputed. In 3:25–6, Paul insists that God has demonstrated his righteousness in Christ.

¹⁰ 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22, 25, 26; 10:3 (*bis*).

Paul might well have gone on to tell us that this righteousness was the goal of the law. Instead, he tells us that Christ himself is the goal of the law—but goes on to explain *why* in the phrase εἰς δικαιοσύνην παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι. He is the goal of the law because he *is* righteousness (cf. 1 Cor 1:30), and because he realizes righteousness for every believer. This is the righteousness which has been granted to Gentiles (9:30). What Paul's fellow-Jews failed to recognize, in seeking their own righteousness, was that the goal of the law was the righteousness of God, a righteousness that is available to all who believe. Like climbers toiling up a mountain, they had set their sights on a ridge, mistaking it for the top, and had not noticed their real goal—the peak hidden behind it.

Once again, Paul appeals to scripture to back his argument—this time to Moses himself—and draws a contrast between the righteousness which is ἐκ νόμου and that which is ἐκ πίστεως. Even without the parallel in Phil 3:9, it is clear that the righteousness ἐκ νόμου is the righteousness that the Jews have sought to establish—their own righteousness—while the righteousness ἐκ πίστεως is the righteousness belonging to God. Since Paul clearly assumes that both of the passages he quotes¹¹ were written by Moses, he is appealing to the law itself as the witness to these two kinds of righteousness. The law, then, speaks of a righteousness based on works (v. 5)—a righteousness which, however, has already been described in 9:32 and in 10:3 in disparaging terms. There Paul has described how Israel had pursued the law of righteousness as though it could be attained by works, and how her people had *ignorantly* sought to establish their own righteousness. But, the law *also* speaks of a righteousness that is based on faith (vv. 6–10), and witnesses to the fact that all that is necessary for salvation is the confession that Christ is Lord and faith that he has been raised from the dead. In a remarkable piece of hijacking, Deut 30:12ff. is discovered to refer, not to the law and to obedience to it, but to the gospel and to faith in Christ. The law itself thus points beyond itself, to its “goal,” namely Christ.

The implication of Paul's argument is clear. If God's promises have been fulfilled, and his purpose—set out in the law—is achieved in Christ, that purpose must be *prior* to the law. Although he comes *after* the Law, Christ is certainly no “afterthought,” but represents

¹¹ Lev 18:5 and Deut 30:12–14.

God's purpose from the beginning of time. This is well summed up in Rom 16:25 (whether or not this passage was written by Paul himself): the proclamation of the gospel means the revelation of the *μυστήριον*, which has been hidden for long ages but which is now made manifest, and has been made known through the prophetic writings—or rather (though this is not spelled out), through Christian exegesis of the prophets. If Christ is the *τέλος νόμου*, *the goal* of the law rather than simply its ending, then he must also have been there at its beginning. What Paul does, therefore, is not to interpret Christ in relation to the law, but to interpret the law in relation to Christ.

Paul's understanding of the relationship between Christ and the law in this passage is in keeping with his argument in the rest of Romans. Relying on the law does *not* make one righteous before God (2:17–3:20); but God has now revealed his righteousness apart from the law, yet witnessed to by the law and prophets, and this righteousness comes, through Christ, to all who believe (3:21ff.). The law, good though it was, had been unable to save, and had resulted in death (7), but God has now done what the law, weakened by flesh, was unable to do (8:2). Yet when asked whether his teaching abrogated the law, Paul responds with an indignant *μὴ γένοιτο!* Throughout his argument, Paul emphasizes that the gospel was the fulfilment of God's promises, set out in scripture, that his people would experience his righteousness—promises which are now revealed to include Gentiles as well as Israel. By sending his own Son, God has enabled the *διαίωμα* of the law to be fulfilled (8:34), and the goal of the law—righteousness—has been reached (10:4). Since Christ is the fulfilment of the law, the obedience required by the covenant is achieved in him: so it is that the proclamation of the gospel leads to the obedience of faith (1:5; cf. 15:18; 16:26). The law is not abrogated, but *fulfilled*.

But what of Paul's *other* writings? Galatians, so similar in theme, nevertheless seems far more negative in what it says about the law. It was delivered through angels, by the hand of a mediator (3:19), and though its divine origin is not denied, it is clearly being regarded as inferior to Christ; the "works of the law" are linked with the curse of Deut. 27:26 (3:10).¹² Can Christ be said to be the goal of the law

¹² Paul's argument is obscure, since the curse of Deuteronomy is pronounced on those who fail to do what the law commands. It is possible, as Christopher Stanley has argued ("Under a Curse: a Fresh Reading of Galatians 3.10–14," *NTS* 36

here? Indeed he can! For in 3:24, Paul specifically describes it as our *παιδαγωγός*, whose role was to bring us to Christ. The *παιδαγωγός* was not a teacher but a custodian, whose function was to protect the child from harm and ensure that he learned good manners. The role of the law was thus to act as “our” custodian until the coming of Christ, when righteousness on the basis of Christ became possible. But Paul expresses the idea more positively than this: it was “*in order that* (ἵνα) we might be ‘rightwised’ on the basis of faith” that the law held “us” in custody: the *purpose* of the law was to point to Christ, and thus to bring us to the righteousness that is based on faith. In the course of his argument Paul lists various opposing powers: the works of the law are opposed to faith (3:2, cf. Rom 9:31), the flesh to the Spirit (3:3), and the curse of the law to the blessing of Abraham (3:10–14). In Gal 4, we find slavery opposed to sonship. One contrast that we might have expected is “law” and “promise,” since the argument of 3:15–20 is that the promises precede the law and are not annulled by it. But in 3:21, Paul insists that the law is *not* opposed to the promises. The role of the law was *not* to bring righteousness or to make alive, but to “imprison all things under the power of sin” (3:22) until the appointed time (4:1). Righteousness comes from faith, and the law is not based on faith, but on works (3:11–12).

Paul’s argument here differs in many ways from the one he uses in Romans 9–10. The law itself, as well as its works, is contrasted with πίστις, and specifically described as *not* being ἐκ πίστεως (3:12). Nevertheless, it witnesses to the blessing promised to Abraham, and is a *παιδαγωγός* εἰς Χριστόν. There are differences, too, between Paul’s use of Abraham here and in Romans 4: significantly, Paul identifies the “seed of Abraham” with Christ himself, and stresses the priority of the promise of future blessing made to Abraham and to his seed to the law. If the law is a *παιδαγωγός* until the coming of Christ, that is because God’s promises concerning Christ were already made *before* the law was given. The law is a temporary measure, but Christ came at “the fullness of time,” in order to bring God’s eternal purpose to completion.

(1990) 481–511), that we should understand the curse here to be potential rather than actual, but even if he is right, the tone is far more negative than in Romans—presumably because of the urgency of the situation which Paul was addressing in Galatians.

Paul's argument in Romans 9–10 is in many ways similar to the one he presents in Phil 3:4–10. Here, Paul lists his privileges as a Jew (cf. Rom 9:4–5), and contrasts what he has abandoned—his own righteousness, that which is ἐκ νόμου—with the righteousness that comes διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, and which is ἐκ θεοῦ. The contrast between a righteousness that is ἐκ νόμου and that which is ἐκ θεοῦ suggests that once again, as in Romans, Paul thinks of the Jews as having lost sight of the law's true goal. One difference between the two passages is, of course, that Paul implies that he did "attain the law," since he was "perfect" in respect of the righteousness contained in the law (Phil 3:6). Yet the righteousness of God, available through faith, is incomparably greater. Another difference—probably arising from the different circumstances in which the letters were written—is that in Philippians the righteousness of the law is simply *compared*—or rather contrasted!—with the righteousness of God, and the law is not said to point forward to Christ. Nevertheless, the claim in v. 3 that "*we* are the circumcision" shows that the link with the past has not been broken: the *true* circumcision consists of those who have faith, *not* of those who bind themselves to fulfil the works of the law.¹³ There is a sense in which the great privileges enjoyed by Israel foreshadow the even greater privileges of those who are in Christ.

In 2 Corinthians 3 we find another passage where the old and new are compared and contrasted, even though the word νόμος is not used in this epistle. The comparison here is between the ministry of Moses, described as "the ministry of condemnation" and "of death" (vv. 7,9), and "the ministry of the Spirit" and "of righteousness" (vv. 8–9), which is the ministry exercised by Paul himself (4:1). Paul begins by describing the Corinthians as a letter written on human hearts—a metaphor that echoes the hope expressed in Jer 31:31–3 of "a new covenant," written on the people's hearts—and so leads Paul into a series of contrasts: ink is contrasted with the Spirit; hearts with stones; the letter which kills with the Spirit that gives life (v. 6), condemnation with righteousness; what was temporary with what is permanent (v. 11); concealment with revelation (vv. 12–18). One thing, however, has no opposite, and that is glory, which accompanies both the old and the new. True, the glory that

¹³ The phrase τοὺς κακοὺς ἐργάτας in v. 2 is presumably a parody of reliance on "works."

attended the ministry of death fades in comparison with the glory of the ministry of righteousness (v.10), but it was, nevertheless, genuine glory—such glory, indeed, that the Israelites could not bear to look at it (v. 7). The ministry of condemnation and death is the ministry of the law, and the story to which Paul is alluding is that of Moses receiving the law on Sinai. According to that story, when Moses, after speaking with God, came down from the mountain carrying the tablets of the law in his hands, his face shone with reflected glory. This glory was so dazzling, that after he had delivered the law to Israel, he was obliged to wear a veil over his face when he was in the people's presence: the glory was too great for them to bear.

Yet this glory, argues Paul, is as nothing compared with the far greater glory that has now been revealed in the ministry of righteousness. Paul now gives a different explanation for the veil: it was not intended solely to cover the glory on Moses' face, but to conceal "the end of what was being done away with" (v. 13). Once again we have the word τέλος, and once again its meaning is disputed. There are other uncertainties. What is it that is being abrogated? It seems most likely that the participle καταργούμενον picks up the previous use of that word in v. 11. What is temporary, and is being abrogated, is the ministry of condemnation and death given to Moses in the law. What Moses conceals is the τέλος of this system. As in Rom 10:4, τέλος here may mean either termination or goal. Here, however, there is less problem than there is there in taking it to mean "termination," since we are not talking about the law itself, but about Moses' ministry—a ministry of condemnation and death, which we have been told has been abrogated (v. 11).

Writing about this passage some 20 years ago, I understood τέλος to mean "full stop."¹⁴ If this is right, Paul is now saying that what Moses was concealing was not the glory that was too bright to gaze on, but the fact that the glory was no longer there. Today, I am persuaded that τέλος means primarily "goal," or "purpose," as in Rom 10:4¹⁵—though here, as there, that sense will necessarily imply

¹⁴ "Beyond the things that are written: St Paul's use of scripture," *NTS* 27 (1981) 295–309, reprinted in *From Adam to Christ* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1990) 139–54.

¹⁵ So e.g., J. Héring, *The Second Epistle of Saint Paul to the Corinthians* (London: Epworth, 1967) *in loc.*; R. P. C. Hanson, *II Corinthians* (London: SCM, 1954) *in loc.*; A. T. Hanson, *Jesus Christ in the Old Testament* (London: SPCK, 1965) 28–9.

also "termination." Some commentators, objecting to this interpretation, ask why Paul might have thought that "Moses wanted to hide the aim of the old covenant—that is, Christ—from Israel."¹⁶ But the question can be turned round: why should Paul have thought that Moses would wish to hide the fact that the glory was fading, and that the system based on the law was only temporary? For certainly he is arguing that Moses concealed *something* from Israel, and in that sense can be accused of deception—the very charge that has been brought against Paul, and against which he is attempting to defend himself (4:2f.)!

The logic of 2 Cor 3:12–18 seems to me to demand that τέλος here means "goal," since Paul goes on to describe what takes place when the veil is removed—in Christ. *Until* that happens, whenever Moses is read, the veil is still present—though it is now said to be on their (i.e. Jewish) hearts. "But when someone turns to the Lord, the veil is removed" (v. 16). This quotation from Exod 34:34 is here understood to refer, not to Moses, but to the believer. But who is the Lord? Is it God or Christ? In v. 17 Paul explains: the Lord is in fact the Spirit, who brings freedom. Freedom from what? presumably from γράμμα, and so from condemnation and death. If Moses veiled his face in order to conceal the fact that the old system had come to an end, then the removal of the veil should lead to the discovery that the glory had faded. Instead, however, its removal means that we see "the glory of the Lord"—and, like Moses, reflect it. What we see is the fulfilment of the old system—which, though it brought condemnation and death, had nevertheless *promised* life. But the glory we now see does not need to be veiled—instead, "reflecting that glory, we are transformed into the same image from glory to glory" (v. 18).

Are the ministry that led to condemnation and death and the ministry that leads to life unconnected? Is it simply that we once relied for illumination on a box of candles, but now have been connected to mains electricity? I once used that illustration to compare the glory revealed on the face of Moses with that revealed on the face of Christ. But it now seems to me to be inadequate, since it

Cf. M. Thrall, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1993) 257–8.

¹⁶ V. P. Furnish, *II Corinthians* (AB 32A; Garden City: Doubleday, 1984) 207. Cf. C. K. Barrett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (London: A. & C. Black, 1973) 120.

ignores the fact that Paul is convinced that the *source* of illumination is the same: it is more a case of replacing old, low-wattage bulbs with the newest and brightest bulbs on the market, and plugging them into the same sockets. In other words, there is an essential link between the two revelations of δόξα—even though, as in Gal 3:19, that which came by the hand of Moses was now seen by Paul to be inferior. Yet even my new image fails to convey Paul's full meaning: for the "new" bulbs prove to be the original, the "old" ones an inferior substitute. Christ is not just one who passes on God's glory, but the clearest expression of that glory. Moses' face shone because he had glimpsed the glory of God himself on Sinai. The glory that is *now* revealed is also the glory of the Lord, a glory which *we* reflect (κατοπτρίζομενοι, 3:18). Where do we see this glory? In the face of Jesus Christ (4:6), who is himself the embodiment of glory because he is the image of God (4:4). The τέλος of the old system was, in fact, not simply its goal but its original expression, the revelation glimpsed by Moses on Sinai. In place of the reflected glory of the law, we have the undiminished glory of *the Lord*. And this glory is nothing less than the light which shone out of darkness when God created the world (4:6; cf. Gen 1:3).

We now discover, therefore, that the glory Paul has been talking about is the glory of *Christ*, who is the image of God (v. 4). The gospel Paul proclaims is that *Jesus Christ* is Lord (v. 5), so if we reflect "the glory of the Lord" and are being changed into "the same image" (3:18), Paul is clearly meaning that Christian believers become like Christ—a familiar enough Pauline theme. The veil, which has moved in Paul's exegesis from Moses' face to Jewish hearts, is now said to rest on the gospel—but it hides it only from those whose minds have been blinded, preventing them from seeing the light of the gospel—the gospel which proclaims Christ as Lord. Paul might well have said "the glory glimpsed by Moses on Sinai was the glory now revealed in Christ." In fact, however, he takes the continuity in revelation back to creation. The God who, at creation, said "Let light shine out of darkness" (and who revealed his glory on Sinai) is the God who reveals himself to us in the light we now see on the face of Jesus Christ.

Although Paul's argument necessarily implies that the revelation granted to Moses was inferior, it is important to remember that he does not deny that it *was* a genuine revelation, and that it was "glorious."

Similar ideas are reflected in an earlier passage—1 Cor 10:4—another verse which attracts many divergent views! Using another of the Exodus stories—this time that of Israel's travels in the wilderness—Paul refers to the rock from which water poured when Moses struck it (Exod 17:6; cf. Num 20:7–13). The fact that Paul refers to the rock as having “followed” the Israelites shows that he was familiar with an interpretation of the story that is found also in later rabbinical writings. Paul's contemporary, Philo, refers to the story of the rock which provided water, as does Wis 11:1–4. Whereas the latter simply remark that Wisdom was at work in these events, however, Philo identifies the rock itself with Wisdom. The rock is the source of water, with which Philo links manna, and both water and manna are symbols of the Word of God—the Torah.¹⁷ For Paul, the rock was Christ, and he was thus the source of nourishment. Most commentators point to the identification of Christ with Wisdom earlier in the epistle (1:24, 30), and suggest that this is the basis of the claim that he is the rock here. Recently, however, some scholars have questioned whether “Wisdom Christology” is as important for Paul as has been claimed, and it has been pointed out that since, in chapter 1, Paul's concern is to persuade the Corinthians that their own wisdom is worthless and that they must rely on the power and wisdom of God, the language he uses there is likely to echo that being used by the Corinthians themselves.¹⁸ We should note, moreover, that the term “wisdom” is not used in 1 Cor 10:1–5, and there is no necessary link with the argument of chapter 1. We need to look carefully, therefore, at 10:1–5 itself.

Discussion of this passage has tended to centre on the question as to whether or not Paul is thinking about the pre-existent Christ as being present in the Old Testament. Such arguments, I suggest, miss the point. Paul is talking not so much about Christ being present *in* the story, as about him being the reality which lies *behind* the Old Testament story. Just as the source of Moses' glory was the

¹⁷ *Leg. Alleg.* 2.86

¹⁸ On this point see Gordon D. Fee, “Wisdom Christology in Paul: A Dissenting View,” *The Way of Wisdom: Essays in Honor of Bruce K. Waltke*, ed. J. I. Packer and Sven Soderlund (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000) 251–79; reprinted in Gordon D. Fee, *To What End Exegesis?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Vancouver: Regent College Publishing, 2001) 351–78. *Contra*, Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (NICTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Carlisle: Paternoster, 2000) 728: “We cannot readily underplay the role for Paul of Christ the Word of God (1:30).”

glory of the Lord—the glory we now see fully revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ—so the source of the water (and the manna), symbols of the Torah, is said to have been Christ.

It is because Christ is the *source* of what was revealed in the Torah—the rock from which the water flowed—that Paul can go on to ascribe to him the role which was played, in Jewish thought, by God's Word or Wisdom in creation. If by his Word God brought the world into being (Gen 1:1), and if Wisdom was with him at the beginning (Prov 8:22; Eccl 24:1–12) and is the fashioner of all things (Wis 7:22), then this is the role which must now be attributed to Christ. It is he—not the Torah—who is God's Word or Wisdom. He is the divine agent *through* whom all things come into being. Paul sums it up in one tight formula in 1 Cor 8:6: "There is one God, the Father, from [ἐξ] whom are all things and for [εἰς] whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, *through* [διὰ] whom are all things and *through* [διὰ] whom we exist." This formula is echoed by what Paul says of God himself in Rom 11:36, but unlike that passage, this summary attributes the agency of creation and redemption to Christ. We do not need to argue from 1 Cor 1:24 and 30 that 1 Cor 8:6 expresses so-called "Wisdom Christology," for the basis of Paul's understanding of Christ's role in creation is evident in 1 Cor 10:4 itself: if Christ was the source of spiritual food and drink for the Israelites, then he is the Word spoken by God at creation and on Sinai, the Wisdom that guided Israel in the wilderness. Paul begins, not from an identification of Christ with Wisdom, but with the recognition of his priority to the law.

But though we do not need the identification with Wisdom in 1 Cor 1:24,30 in order to support this interpretation of 1 Cor 10, they may well reflect similar ideas to those expressed in this passage. It is true that the argument in 1 Cor 1 begins from human wisdom, but the divine Wisdom that is opposed to it is the gospel itself (v. 23), and though the message of Christ crucified is described as "folly" (the obvious contrast to wisdom) to Gentiles, it is said to be a σκάνδαλον to Jews, reminding us of Rom 9:33. And in his final summary (1:30), Paul describes Christ as σοφία . . . , δικαιοσύνη τε καὶ ἁγιασμός. What is found in Christ is precisely what the law promised.

Whether we think the epistle to the Colossians is Pauline or not, the Christology of Col 1:15–20 is not so very far from 1 Cor 8:6. I am still attracted by the theory of C. F. Burney, proposed 75 years ago, that this passage is based on an exposition of Gen 1:1 and Prov

8:22.¹⁹ Here Paul spells out the relationship of Christ, the divine Wisdom, to his creation, in a series of images and prepositions: ἐν, διὰ and—significantly!—εἰς. In 1 Cor 8, εἰς—together with ἐξ—was used of God. These three prepositions are then repeated in the second section of this christological exposition, where Christ's relationship with the *new* creation is brought out. Christ, then, is not simply the one through whom and by whom all things came into being, and through whom and by whom all things are now reconciled; in Colossians he is seen as the one for whom all this took place. In other words, he is the goal of creation (τὰ πάντα . . . εἰς αὐτὸν ἔκτισται)—the goal that is reached when all things are finally reconciled to him (v. 20). This passage, too, of course, bristles with problems—not least in that last phrase. Are all things reconciled to *Christ*, as the syntax suggests? Translators instinctively understand "him" to refer to "God" here, even though God has not been mentioned. I suggest that the symmetry of the passage demands that we understand this second εἰς αὐτὸν to mean that all things are reconciled "to him"—i.e. to Christ—just as they are said to have been created εἰς αὐτόν. This means that everything in the universe has been restored to the order intended by God.²⁰ This is possible because it pleased πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα to dwell in Christ. This phrase suggests that he embodies all the attributes of God—another echo of the so-called "Wisdom Christology."²¹ A similar idea is expressed in John 1:16 of the Logos, and seems there to reflect the language of Exod 33:19, which is part of the story of God's self-revelation to Moses on Sinai.²²

A few verses later, Paul states his own aim: it is "to present every man mature in Christ"—i.e. τέλειος. If creation reaches its goal in Christ, then of course man will do so also. Needless to say, modern translations shy away from using the word "man" in this verse. Nevertheless, it is important! For of course, the opening phrase in Col 1:15—ὅς ἐστιν εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἀοράτου—links the theme of creation and Adam. εἰκὼν is a term used of Wisdom and the Word,

¹⁹ C. F. Burney, "Christ as the APXH of Creation," *JTS* 27 (1926) 160ff.

²⁰ So E. Lohse, *Die Briefe an die Kolosser und an Philemon* (KEK; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1968) *in loc.*

²¹ Philo speaks of God completely filling the Logos with incorporeal powers, *Som.* 1.62, cf. 1.75.

²² Cf. M. D. Hooker, "The Johannine Prologue and the Messianic Secret," *NTS* 21 (1974) 40–58, esp. 54–6.

both in inter-testamental literature and by Philo.²³ But we also find there the tradition, going back to Gen 1:26, that Adam was created κατ' εἰκόνα θεοῦ. To claim that Christ is εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ, therefore, is to claim that he holds a special position, both in relation to creation *and* in relation to mankind. What can be said of Christ in relation to the cosmos (that he is πρωτότοκος and pre-eminent) can be said in relation to the new man, who is being renewed according to the image of the creator (Col 3:10). The parallels are not exact, but are nevertheless significant.

We have argued that what Paul says about Christ in relation to creation (his so-called "Wisdom Christology") is dependent upon his belief that Christ is prior to the law: his claim is, simply, that what Judaism said about the Word and Wisdom applied to Christ, *not* to the law. It might, then, be better to speak about "Torah Christology," rather than "Wisdom Christology." We now see that Col 1 brings the consequences of that belief into striking conjunction with a parallel belief about Christ's "priority" to Adam.

One fascinating aspect of all this is that the argument that Paul appears to be using in relation to the law is parallel to the argument that he uses in relation to Adam. For although, as he reminds us in 1 Cor 15:46, the physical man—the first Adam—came *before* the spiritual in temporal terms, nevertheless the *last* Adam is the *true* Adam. The first Adam was a *type of the one to come* (Rom 5:14), and it is the latter—Christ—who is *the* image of God (2 Cor 4:4),²⁴ after whose image we are being recreated (Rom 8:29; 1 Cor 15:49; 2 Cor 3:18). Interestingly, the ideas of glory surrounding the figure of Adam are similar to those associated with the law, for in Jewish tradition both Adam and the law reflected the glory of God. In Col 1 we find once again that in Christ we have moved to the *source* of the glory. He is *the* εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ, the embodiment of God's Wisdom, glimpsed by Moses on Mount Sinai; he is *the* εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ, in contrast to Adam, who was created κατ' εἰκόνα θεοῦ.²⁵ The conviction that the τέλος νόμου is Christ corresponds with the belief that Adam is the τύπος of the one to come.

Before I go back to the questions with which I began, it is worth

²³ Wis 7:26 (cf. 9:1–2); *Leg. Alleg.* 1.43; *Conf.* 147; *Fug.* 101; *Som.* 2.45.

²⁴ See M. D. Hooker, "Adam *Redivivus*: Philippians 2 Once More," *The Old Testament in the New Testament, Essays in Honour of J. L. North*, ed. Steve Moyise (JSNTSup 189; Sheffield: Academic Press, 2000) 220–34.

²⁵ Gen 1:26; Sir. 173; *Leg. Alleg.* 3.96.

reminding ourselves that what Paul is doing has parallels, not only in Jewish literature, but within the New Testament itself.

The link in 2 Cor 4, for example, between the glory revealed on Sinai and the light of creation, has an obvious parallel in John 1:1–18, where the author begins from the light in Genesis 1 and moves on to the glory of Exod 34.²⁶ For John, God's revelation to Moses in the law is affirmed—but what we have in Christ is the embodiment of grace and truth, the glory belonging to an only son. No one (not even Moses!) has ever seen God, but Christ has made him known and revealed his glory. Significantly, the term John uses to sum up Christ's continuity with, superiority to and priority to the law is "Word." This introductory passage is of particular importance, since it explains the assumptions in the rest of the gospel, where we see how Moses bears witness to Jesus as Son of God (5:39–47). Though the Son follows Moses, he in fact precedes him—he must do, since he precedes Abraham, and is greater than Abraham (8:39–59). The one who is near to God's heart is also nearest to the source of revelation—indeed, he *is* that revelation, since his mission is to reveal the glory which he shared with God before the world came into existence.

John's Gospel is written in a context of controversy, and the author's purpose is clearly to show that Christ is the true fulfilment of Judaism. What is said about Jesus echoes what was once said about Torah: he is, e.g., light, life, the way, the truth, bread, water. As Peder Borgen has expressed it: "John transfers the Torah's function to Jesus."²⁷ Paul's arguments were developed in a somewhat different setting, since his mission was to be the apostle to the Gentiles; nevertheless, his debates about Christ—the Messiah—and about the law are shaped by his arguments with his fellow-Jews. It is not surprising if there are interesting parallels between Paul and John.

And there are obvious parallels with other New Testament writers—most notably with Matthew,²⁸ but also with the author to the Hebrews.

²⁶ I have explored these parallels in "The Johannine Prologue and the Messianic Secret." See also Peder Borgen, "Logos was the True Light," *NovT* 14 (1972) 115–130, reprinted in *Logos was the True Light* (Relieff 9; Trondheim: Tapir, 1983) 95–110.

²⁷ Borgen, "Logos" 124 = *Logos*, 104.

²⁸ I have discussed these briefly in "Creative Conflict: The Torah and Christology," *Christology, Controversy and Community, New Testament Essays in Honour of David R. Catchpole*, ed. David G. Horrell and Christopher M. Tuckett (Leiden: Brill, 2000) 117–36.

Concluding Questions

How, then, did Paul come to affirm that Christ was the τέλος νόμου? It is clear that he—and some of our other New Testament writers—have moved a long way from the simple notion that his life, death and resurrection “fulfilled” particular passages in the law and the prophets. What all these writers have in common is a background of controversy with their fellow-Jews. The other authors I have mentioned—Matthew, John and the writer to the Hebrews—all seem to be on the fringes of Judaism, showing a passionate devotion to their Jewish heritage and faith, yet all being “sidelined” by orthodox Judaism. Paul, in a sense, had deliberately “sidelined” himself by accepting the commission to be the apostle to the Gentiles—but he, too, continued to believe that God’s self-revelation to Israel was true. What all of them had to do was to reconcile their conviction that something new and decisive had happened in Christ with their belief that God had spoken to Moses and the prophets. For Paul, four elements were crucial:

- (1) His experience of Christ, which had exploded his previous conviction that those who did what the law commanded would live (Lev 18:5, quoted in Gal 3:12 and Rom 10:5).
- (2) His realization that the scope of the gospel included the Gentiles, and that he was commissioned to be their apostle, which meant that he had to think again about what God’s purposes might have been; if God’s Spirit had been poured out on Gentiles, then the law was *not* the basis of righteousness (Gal 3:1–5).
- (3) His controversies with fellow-Jews, which made him refine his arguments.
- (4) His Jewish education, which provided him with the necessary knowledge of the scriptures and the traditions based on them.

It was because Paul had discovered that the δικαιοσύνη ἐκ θεοῦ was *not* identical with the δικαιοσύνη ἐκ νόμου, but came διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ, that he had been forced to acknowledge that τέλος νόμου Χριστός. With that realization came the conviction that what he had once believed about the Torah was in fact true of Christ. The experience of his Gentile converts confirmed this. They had received the Holy Spirit through the proclamation of Christ crucified. Peder Borgen has pointed out that the same link is found in the story of Cornelius in Acts 34–48. Peter describes how Christ was hung on

a tree (Acts 10:39, quoting Deut 21:22) and raised to life, and while he is still speaking, the Holy Spirit is poured out on those he is addressing (10:44).²⁹ For Luke, as for Paul, the pouring out of the Spirit on the Gentiles is proof that nothing more is necessary (cf. also Acts 11:1–18). The fact that Christ suffered the penalty prescribed in the law, and that its verdict was reversed by God, meant that the curse of the law was annulled and the promised blessing was achieved. For Paul, it was the gospel itself that demonstrated, on the one hand, that the law's temporary rule was at an end, on the other, that what it promised had arrived, in Christ.

What, then, are the implications of the belief that Christ is the τέλος νόμου?

It is clear that they are enormous. (1) By speaking of Christ as the "End," we have seen that Paul was necessarily brought to think of him also as the "Beginning"—an idea that becomes explicit in Col 1. Hence we find statements that apparently imply preexistence.

(2) What had been said about the law in relation to creation was now understood to be more appropriately said about Christ. It was he who was God's agent in both creation and in redemption—a sphere in which the law was shown to have been ineffectual, because of the weakness of the flesh.

(3) If Christ "replaces" the law, and occupies the position previously occupied by the Torah in Jewish thought, then God's people are redefined: they consist no longer of those obedient to the law—those "under the law"—but of those who are "in Christ," and who believe in him. God's purpose is discovered to be far greater than was hitherto imagined.

(4) The way of life to be followed is no longer to walk in the ways of the law, but to walk in the way of the Lord; it is to fulfil, not the law given on Sinai, but "the law of Christ" (Gal 6:2). Paul has adapted the pattern that E. P. Sanders has famously called "covenantal nomism." This covenant, however, is established in Christ, not at Sinai. But though Paul refers to it as a "new covenant" (2 Cor 3:6, cf. 1 Cor 11:25), I suspect that he would have said that it is in reality the covenant of promise, once made to Abraham, and now

²⁹ Peder Borgen, "Jesus Christ, the Reception of the Spirit and a Cross-National Community," *Jesus of Nazareth, Lord and Christ*, ed. J. B. Green and M. Turner (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994) 220–36, reprinted in Peder Borgen, *Early Christianity and Hellenistic Judaism* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1996) 253–72.

ratified in Christ (Gal 3:15–29), and so the *original* covenant. Just as Christ, the “Second Adam,” was in fact the *true* image of God, after whom Adam was created, and just as the glory revealed in Christ is the *source* of the glory reflected by Moses, so the covenant ratified in him is the *original* covenant, and the covenant with Moses the temporary, earthly counterpart of what is eternal and heavenly (Gal 4:21–31).³⁰ This covenant has been ratified through Christ’s death and resurrection, and the “law” that is linked with it is simply the requirement that one lives “in Christ.” Pressed to spell out what that means, Paul usually gives a list of abstract terms, rather than specific rules. Above all, it means love—and those who love have fulfilled the whole law (Gal 5:14).

Christology, cosmology, ecclesiology, ethics—four major topics, these! We take these developments for granted. Did they just evolve? Or are they, in fact, all derived from an idea that is often denied or simply overlooked—that Christ is the *End* of the law, and therefore its *Beginning*?

³⁰ See M. D. Hooker, “‘Heirs of Abraham’: The Gentiles’ Role in Israel’s Story,” *Narrative Dynamics in Paul: A Critical Assessment*, ed. B. W. Longenecker (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002).

THE IMPACT OF THE SITUATIONAL CONTEXTS FOR PAUL'S USE OF BAPTISMAL TRADITIONS IN HIS LETTERS

David Hellholm

As the title indicates there are three problems to be dealt with in this essay: firstly, the pre-Pauline baptismal traditions, secondly, the situational contexts, and thirdly, Paul's own use of these traditions in various situations. Decisive for a correct understanding of the texts *ad rem*, however, is the inter-connectedness of these three aspects.

Accordingly the following issues have contributed to the problems facing the interpreters in regard to the Pauline texts dealing with baptism:

(1) The appraisalment of the importance of the *inter-textual co-texts*, particularly but not exclusively of the Pauline *homologoumena*;

(2) The assessment of the *situational contexts* as part of the underlying argumentation in the letters;

(3) The amount of emphasis laid on the importance of the *intra-textual co-text-analysis*, especially in the form of each letters' argumentative function.

When listing these problems I have chosen first to deal with the inter-textual co-texts in a *diachronic* analysis, then to address the situational contexts as part of the overall *pragmatic* aspect, and finally to carry out a *synchronic* analysis on the basis of the intra-textual co-texts in each of the pericopes under investigation.

1. *Pre-Pauline Baptismal Traditions: The Inter-Textual Co-Texts*

It is certainly correct when Hans Dieter Betz states:¹

Paul's doctrine of baptism as set forth in Romans 6 is characteristically different from what he says about baptism in his other letters.

¹ H. D. Betz, "Transferring a Ritual: Paul's Interpretation of Baptism in Romans 6," *Paul in His Hellenistic Context*, ed. by T. Engberg-Pedersen (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994) 85.

He thereby refers above all to 1 Cor 1:13–17 and Gal 3:26–28 and the fact that baptism is not even mentioned—at least not directly—in 1 Thessalonians being the oldest preserved letter by Paul.²

Among other texts, Betz in particular makes use of 1 Cor 1:13ff. as a witness to the development in Paul's own understanding of baptism. There we read:

Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? I am thankful that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius; lest any one should say that you were baptized in[to] my name. I did baptize also the household of Stephanas. Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized any one else. For Christ has not sent me to baptize but to preach the gospel. . . .

There seems, no doubt, to be a long way from this seemingly negative statement in 1 Corinthians to the positive, almost mystical, understanding of baptism in Romans 6. The intertextual analysis need not—as often assumed—establish similarities only, but can—on the contrary—often also establish differences. The validity of this kind of analysis remains the same, however!

Lars Hartman has pointed to the many baptismal formulas used in Early Christianity already at the time of the New Testament.³ I will here deal with some of the most important formulas as part of the intertextual co-text analysis.

The Name-Formula

We encounter the formula “Into the Name of the Lord Jesus” or similar formulas above all in Acts (8:16; 19:5: εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ; 10:48: ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ; 2:38: ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ).⁴ According to Hartman these formulas had primarily two functions: firstly, to delimit the Christian baptism from that of John the Baptist;⁵ secondly, to designate the baptized Christian as

² See already Betz, *Galatians* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979) 186–7.

³ L. Hartman, *‘Into the Name of the Lord Jesus’*. *Baptism in the Early Church* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1997); see also G. Strecker, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, ed. by F. W. Horn (De Gruyter Lehrbuch; Berlin – New York: de Gruyter, 1996) 171–76.

⁴ Hartman, *‘Into the Name’* 37–43 and 127–45. Further, see the commentaries *ad loc.*

⁵ So already H. Thyen, *Studien zur Sündenvergebung im Neuen Testament und seinen alt-testamentlichen und jüdischen Voraussetzungen* (FRLANT 96; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970) 145–52.

standing in the service of the Lord Jesus.⁶ Regardless of whether the technical formula εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ had its roots in the Greek banking terminology as W. Heitmüller suggested,⁷ or in the Hebrew/Aramaic *l'shem/l'shum* terminology meaning "with regard to" or "bearing . . . in mind," it is likely to have been the earliest baptismal formula preserved.⁸ Hartman who decisively options for the Semitic background of this baptismal terminology does not understand it to designate the baptized Christian as the property of the Lord Jesus,⁹ i.e. to being similar to Heitmüller's interpretation,¹⁰ but to refer to Jesus as the "authority behind the rite, who conferred significance on the rite and made the formula meaningful."¹¹ In my opinion the two alternative roots and meanings of the expression need not exclude each other when used in Early Christian writings but can be seen as complementary in view of different *communication situations*: even if the expression εἰς τὸ ὄνομα (τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ) should be an old Semitic formula that easily could be connected with Christian baptism in its earliest Jewish Christian stages,¹² that formula, when used in hellenistic Christian Churches in connection with baptism, resembled the well known formula εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τινος of the Hellenistic world of commercial language that was used long before the New Testament writings.¹³ In fact, as Hartman himself states, "the expression 'into the name (of somebody)' is . . . unbiblical in so far as it does not occur in the Septuagint. In addition, it is at

⁶ Hartman, 'Into the Name' 41, 45–50.

⁷ W. Heitmüller, 'Im Namen Jesu'. Eine sprach- u[nd] religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zum Neuen Testament, speziell zur altchristlichen Taufe (FRLANT 1; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1903) esp. 95–126.

⁸ Cf., e.g., G. Barth, *Die Taufe in frühchristlicher Zeit* (BThS 4; Neukirchen: Neukirchener, 1981) 45; Hartman, 'Into the Name' 43. Contra H. von Campenhausen; see below note 22.

⁹ Thus, H. Bietenhard, "ὄνομα" (TWNT, Vol. 5; [Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1954] 242–83) 275.

¹⁰ So, e.g., F. J. Leenhardt, *Le baptême chrétien* (CThAP 4; Neuchâtel: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1944) 36; G. R. Beasley-Murray, *Baptism in the New Testament* (London: Macmillan, 1962) 90–92, 100.

¹¹ Hartman, 'Into the Name' 45. Cf. also the discussion in W. Schrage, *Der Erste Brief an die Korinther (1Kor 1,1–6,11)* (EKK VII/1; Zürich: Benziger; Neukirchen: Neukirchener, 1991) 154–5.

¹² Thus Hartman, "La formule baptismale dans les Actes des Apôtres: Quelques observations relatives au style de Luc" *À cause de L'Évangile. Mélanges offerts à Dom Jacques Dupont*, LeDiv 123; (Paris: Cerf, 1985) 727–38 esp. 733–4; *idem*, 'Into the Name' 42f., 47. See, however, the warning by J. A. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles*, (AB 31) (New York: Doubleday, 1998) 266: "... but beware of the late date of the rabbinic evidence adduced. . . ."

¹³ See Heitmüller, 'Im Namen Jesu'

odds with Greek style, and actually in normal Greek used only in banking language.”¹⁴ The polysemy of a syntagma like εἰς τὸ ὄνομα could and probably was monosemized differently due to the various pragmatic situations in which it was used.¹⁵

Interestingly, there are allusions to this early type of baptismal formula in the Pauline letters precisely in 1 Corinthians and here only, and more particularly in 1:13–17, which “presents a brief narration which serves to refute Paul’s own rhetorical question which combats their factionalism directly. . . .”¹⁶

1 Cor 1:13 εἰς τὸ ὄνομα Παύλου ἐβαπτίσθητε

1 Cor 1:15 εἰς τὸ ἐμὸν ὄνομα ἐβαπτίσθητε

1 Cor 6:11 ἐδικαιώθητε ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

“Baptism into the name of the Lord Jesus Christ” is not mentioned directly in 1 Cor 1:13–15 but clearly presupposed. As the rhetorical question, “Was Paul crucified for you?” is meaningful only since not Paul but Christ was crucified, so the rhetorical question, “Were you baptized into the name of Paul?” is meaningful only since the Corinthians were baptized not into the name of Paul but into the name of Jesus Christ!¹⁷

Professor Betz pays attention to the fact that the “name-formula” is used by Paul only here, and is of the opinion that Paul only *reluctantly* accepts this formula, i.a. because it is in the outset concomitant with Peter (cf., e.g., Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48) and furthermore because the schism in Corinth is caused by the fact that the adherents of Peter and Apollos apparently emphasized the importance of the performer of the baptismal rite.¹⁸ Otherwise, Paul shows little

¹⁴ Hartman, ‘*Into the Name*’ 38.

¹⁵ So also Schrage, *1. Korinther (VII/1)*, 155; cf. also Hartman himself, “Baptism,” *ABD* 1.586.

¹⁶ M. M. Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians* (HUTh 28; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1991) 201. Cf. Hartman, ‘*Into the Name*,’ 59–63; A. Lindemann, *Der Erste Korintherbrief* (HNT 9/I; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2000) 41, 140f.

¹⁷ See hereto esp. Barth, *Taufe* 45f. Cf. also Mitchell, *Reconciliation* 87.

¹⁸ Betz, “Ritual,” 86–100, 103–05; *idem*, “Magic and Mystery in the Greek Magical Papyri,” *idem*, *Hellenismus und Urchristentum. Gesammelte Aufsätze I* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1990) 209–29, esp. 220ff. with reference to *PGM* IV. 172, 2254 and Philo, *Virt.* 185; *Vita Mos.* 1.71; *Cherub.* 49; *Spec. leg.* 1.319; similarly H. Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975) 33–36; M. Wolter, “Apollos und die ephesinischen Johannesjünger,” *ZNW* 78 (1987) 49–73, 66; G. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987) 61; C. Wolff,

interest in baptism even at the time of writing 1 Corinthians in the spring of 54–56 CE.¹⁹ If this conclusion is justified will be discussed below.

Form-critically, this baptismal formula can be termed the “Name-Formula,” which evidently was used in the liturgy in connection with the performance of the baptismal rite. Compare hereto also James 2:7: οὐκ αὐτοὶ βλασφημοῦσιν τὸ καλὸν ὄνομα τὸ ἐπικληθὲν ἐφ’ ὑμᾶς;²⁰ It presumably sounded: βαπτίζω/ομέν σε εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ.²¹ The *Sitz im Leben* just suggested is substantiated by the later development of that formula into the “trinitarian formula,” which—due to lack of space—I cannot deal with here.²²

The Baptismal Pronouncement over the Newly Baptized

In Galatians, written sometimes between 50 and 55 CE,²³ we find a different baptismal formula (3:26–28), which Paul apparently

Der erste Brief des Paulus an die Korinther (ThHNT 7; Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1996) 30–1; S. Vollenweider, *Freiheit als neue Schöpfung. Eine Untersuchung zur Eleutheria bei Paulus und in seiner Umwelt* (FRLANT 147; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1989) 328; U. Schnelle, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament* (UTB 1830; 2nd ed., Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996) 90; see, also C. Riedweg, *Mysterienterminologie bei Platon, Philon und Klemens von Alexandrien* (UaLG 26; Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 1987) 26, 59–60, 126–7, esp. 59: “Interessanterweise spielen dabei (sc. at the eleusinian Mysteries) gemäß dieser athenischen Inschrift (sc. *StG* 885) die Mystagogen eine wichtige Rolle: Sie sind für ihre Mysten verantwortlich, ὥπως ἐν τάξει καὶ κοσμίως [πορεῖαν ποιῶσι], wie sinnvoll ergänzt wird (LSS 15,27f.).”

¹⁹ Betz, “Ritual” 104. For the date of 1 Corinthians, see W. G. Kümmel, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, 17th ed., (Heidelberg: Quelle & Meyer, 1973) 242; P. Vielhauer, *Geschichte der urchristlichen Literatur* (De Gruyter Lehrbuch; Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 1975) 141; Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians* 4; Fee, *1 Corinthians* 4–5; H. D. Betz and M. M. Mitchell, “Corinthians, First Epistle to the” (*ABD*, 6 vols.; New York: Doubleday, 1992 1.1139–48), 1.1140; Schrage, *1. Korinther (VII/1)* 36; Schnelle, *Einleitung* 77; Wolff, *Korinther* 12f.; Lindemann, *1. Korintherbrief* 17.

²⁰ See M. Dibelius and H. Greeven, *James* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976) 140–1, and now W. Popkes, *Der Brief des Jakobus* (ThHK 14; Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2001) 169–71; otherwise, e.g., Hartman, “*Into the Name*” 49 note 52 and other recent commentators.

²¹ Cf. Barth, *Taufe* 45f.; G. J. Steyn, “Reflections on TO ONOMA TOU KURIΟΥ in 1 Corinthians,” *The Corinthian Correspondence*, BETL 125, ed. R. Bieringer (Leuven: Peeters, 1996) 479–90, 484.

²² Contra H. Freiherr von Campenhausen, “Taufe auf den Namen Jesu?,” *Urchristliches und Altkirchliches. Vorträge und Aufsätze* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1979) 197–216, who denies that neophytes initially were baptized “into the name of the Lord Jesus”; see the critical evaluation of von Campenhausen’s argumentation in Barth, *Taufe* 45–48; Hartman, “Baptism” 586–7.

²³ Thus Betz, *Galatians* 12 and 103; prior to 1 Corinthians; similarly D. Lührmann,

quotes.²⁴ The structure of this formula has convincingly been worked out by Betz:²⁵

- A Πάντες γὰρ υἱοὶ θεοῦ ἐστε [διὰ τῆς πίστεως] ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.
 B ὅσοι γὰρ εἰς Χριστὸν ἐβαπτίσθητε, Χριστὸν ἐνεδύσασθε.
 C οὐκ ἐνὶ Ἰουδαίῳ οὐδὲ Ἑλλήνι,
 D οὐκ ἐνὶ δοῦλος οὐδὲ ἐλεύθερος,
 E οὐκ ἐνὶ ἄρσεν καὶ θήλυν.
 F πάντες γὰρ ὑμεῖς εἷς ἐστε ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.

This formula is certainly older than the letter to the Galatians, which is documented by its grammatical switch from the 1st person plural in v. 25 to the 2nd person plural in v. 26, by its formal structure with its *inclusio*, by its specific terminology, ἐνεδύσασθε, and not least due to lines D and E, which actually are superfluous for the argumentative force in this letter.²⁶ J. Becker has furthermore pointed to similar expressions in 1 Cor 7:18–22; 12:13; Col 3:11 and Joh 17:21.²⁷ Contrary to Hartman we do not here encounter the formula “in or into the name of the Lord Jesus,”²⁸ and there is furthermore no link-

“Galaterbrief” (RGG 4th ed.; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2000, 451–53) 3.451; Kümmel, *Einleitung* 266: 54–55; Vielhauer, *Geschichte* 110: 54–56; J. L. Martyn, *Galatians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 33A; New York: Doubleday, 1997) 19–20: prior to 1 Corinthians; F. Vouga, *Galater* (HNT 10; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 1998) 11: 49–52 or 52–54. For a *later date*, after 1 and 2 Corinthians and closely before Romans, see, e.g., G. Luedemann, *Paul Apostle to the Gentiles. Studies in Chronology* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984) 85, 90–92, 99, 263: 50/53 but after 1 Cor and simultaneously with 2 Cor; Wolff, *Korinther* 429: 1 Cor 16.1–2 is an earlier instruction than the letter to the Galatians. J. Becker, *Der Brief an die Galater* (NTD 8/1; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998) 16: 55–56.

²⁴ See Betz, “The Literary Composition and Function of Paul’s Letter to the Galatians” *NTS* 21 (1975) 353–79, 371; *idem*, “Ritual” 107; *idem*, *Galatians* 181–85; Hartman, ‘*Into the Name*’ 1–3. Cf. also M. Bouttier, “Complexio Oppositorum: sur les formules de 1 Cor 12,13; Gal 3,26–28; Col 3,10,11,” *NTS* 23 (1976/77) 1–19; Schnelle, *Gerechtigkeit und Christusgegenwart. Vorpaulinische und paulinische Tauftheologie* (GThA 24; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983) 57–62, 191–95; Martyn, *Galatians* 378–80.

²⁵ Betz, “Spirit, Freedom, and Law. Paul’s Message to the Galatian Churches,” *SEÅ* 39 (1974) 145–60, esp. 147f.; German version “Geist, Freiheit und Gesetz,” *Paulinische Studien. Gesammelte Aufsätze* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1994) 3.46–62, esp. 48–50; *idem*, *Galatians* 181f.; Schnelle, *Gerechtigkeit* 58f.; Hartman, ‘*Into the Name*’ 1–3; J. L. Martyn, *Galatians* 378–80; Becker, *Galater* 59–60.

²⁶ Martyn, *Galatians* 376.

²⁷ Becker, *Galater* 60.

²⁸ See R. Bultmann, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, 9th ed. by O. Merk (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1984) 311–12; Betz, *Galatians* 186; Martyn, *Galatians* 375f.; Vouga, *Galater* 90f.; Hellholm, “Enthymemic Argumentation in Paul: The Case of Romans 6,” *Paul in His Hellenistic Context*, ed. by T. Engberg-Pedersen (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994) 119–79, 151–53.

age to the performer of the baptismal rite, either to Paul or to anyone else.²⁹ The short-form εἰς Χριστὸν ἐβαπτίσθητε, may be interpreted as a shortening for εἰς ἓν σῶμα Χριστοῦ ἐβαπτίσθημεν, that we encounter in 1 Cor 12:13,³⁰ but should more likely be considered a traditional formulation with a polysemic meaning.^{30a} Here we read about “putting on Christ” in connection with baptism.³¹ All who have been baptized have been baptized into Christ and have put on Christ, i.e. as a cosmic garment or a cosmic being.³² This means that all who have been baptized into Christ have experienced a divine transformation and incorporation into Christ,³³ i.e. into the Church: πάντες γὰρ ὑμεῖς εἰς ἓστε ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.³⁴

Form-critically this pre-Pauline composition was named a “macarism” by Betz,³⁵ but should in view of the lacking μακάριος/οι or its equivalents rather be characterized as a “*baptismal pronouncement*,” “Taufruf”³⁶ or “Heilszuspruch”³⁷ that was proclaimed most likely by the baptizer or his/her assistant (cf. Hipp., *Trad. apost.* 21.16–17)—as the 2nd person plural indicates—over those baptized after the performance of the baptismal rite.³⁸ What the performer of the baptismal act does

²⁹ Hartman, ‘*Into the Name*’ 56.

³⁰ Schrage, *1. Korinther (VII/3)* 216. Differently, however, Lindemann, *1. Korintherbrief* 271: “In der Formulierung εἰς ἓν σῶμα Χριστοῦ ἐβαπτίσθημεν klingt die Taufformel βαπτίζειν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα an. . .”

^{30a} See below note 72.

³¹ Cf. Betz, *Galatians* 188: “The figurative language of clothing is found already in the Old Testament, but the ‘putting on’ of a redeemer figure has parallels only in the mystery religions and in gnosticism.”

³² See hereto esp. N. A. Dahl, “Kleidungsmetaphern: der alte und der neue Mensch,” *Studies in Ephesians. Introductory Questions, Text- & Edition-Critical Issues, Interpretation of Texts and Themes*, ed. by D. Hellholm, V. Blomkvist, and T. Fornberg, WUNT 131 (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2000) 389–411. English trans. as Dahl and Hellholm, “Garment-Metaphors: the Old and the New Human Being,” *Antiquity and Humanity. Essays on Ancient Religion and Philosophy. Presented to Hans Dieter Betz on His 70th Birthday*, ed. by Adela Yarbro Collins and Margaret M. Mitchell (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2001) 139–58.

³³ For transformation as part of becoming a Christian, see Hellholm, “Die argumentative Funktion von Römer 7.1–6,” *NTS* 43 (1997) 395–6, 407, 411.

³⁴ The masculine pronoun εἷς may refer to Christ, or to the body of Christ, or to the new creation in Christ, see Betz, *Galatians* 200–1; Martyn, *Galatians* 377; Vouga, *Galater* 92; Dahl and Hellholm, “Kleidungsmetaphern” 392f./“Garment-Metaphors,” 144–5. See also Eph 4:22, 24; Col 3:9f.; NHC II.3: *Gos. Phil.* 75, 21–24; *Acts Thom.* 48.

³⁵ Betz, *Galatians* 183.

³⁶ Schnelle, *Gerechtigkeit* 58f.: “Es handelt sich . . . auch bei Gal 3,26–28 um einen Taufruf, der die neue Situation des Getauften vor Gott definiert.”

³⁷ Becker, *Galater* 60.

³⁸ See Betz, *Galatians* 180f., 184: “In the liturgy the saying would communicate

proclaim over those having been baptized is by all likelihood “an ecclesiastical maxim of the antiochene Church,” which in fact also constitutes a “social prime-confession” (*soziales Urbekenntnis*)³⁹ as part of the neophytes’ incorporation into the Church.

This means that we here detect (1) a different structure, (2) a different terminology, (3) different conceptions regarding baptism and its effect, and (4) a different *specific Sitz im Leben* than in the (at least tradition-historically earlier) baptismal texts from 1 Corinthians. From this undisputable fact Betz concludes that Paul’s understanding of baptism has changed, not only with regard to content but also with regard to his attitude towards baptism as such.⁴⁰ This conclusion, however, seems to me to be unwarranted, as I will try to show below.

The Baptismal Credo Enunciated by Newly Baptized Believers

Professor Betz further points out that “recent studies have shown that Paul’s interpretation of baptism, especially as regards Romans 6, still presents problems of extraordinary complexity for New Testament scholarship.”⁴¹ Regarding Romans 6, Betz’s thesis is that only here do we encounter Paul’s real understanding of Christian baptism: “My thesis is that he did not fully develop it before Romans.”⁴² In fact Betz’s conclusion implies that Paul did not use any pre-Pauline baptismal tradition when writing Romans 6. This, however, is in my opinion unlikely.⁴³ In Romans 6 baptism is depicted as a “union of fate with Christ” in a way in which Paul has not spoken of baptism elsewhere; insofar Betz’s judgement is indeed correct. The entire

information to the newly initiated, telling them of their eschatological status before God . . .”; so also Martyn, *Galatians* 379; Becker, *Galater* 59.

³⁹ G. Sellin, “Die Armen und die Reichen in Korinth. Vom Umgang einer urchristlichen Groß-stadtgemeinde mit den sozialen Problemen” (*Die Armen und die Reichen. Soziale Gerechtigkeit in der Stadt* [Kirche in der Stadt 3]; Hamburg: Rissen 1993, 29–44) 40; regarding the antiochene origin, see esp. Becker, *Galater* 60.

⁴⁰ Betz, “Ritual” 106.

⁴¹ Betz, “Ritual” 84.

⁴² Betz, “Ritual” 107. Cf. already R. Schnackenburg, “Todes- und Lebensgemeinschaft mit Christus. Neue Studien zu Röm 6,1–11,” *MThZ* 6 (1955) 32–53, 42.

⁴³ Thus already W. Heitmüller, “Zum Problem Paulus und Jesus,” *ZNW* 13 (1912) 320–37, 335; R. Bultmann, *Theologie* 142–46; so also N. Gäumann, *Taufe und Ethik. Studien zu Römer 6* (BEvTh 47; Munich: Kaiser, 1967) 47ff., 73ff.; Schnelle, *Gerechtigkeit* 80f., and Strecker, *Theologie* 174; and see my interpretation below.

exposition aims at showing that, as Christ died and was raised, so also the believing and baptized Christian. The *baptismal credo* Paul is using in this chapter is built on the *Pistis*-formula which Paul explicitly cites in 1 Cor 15:3–5.⁴⁴

- (1) ὅτι Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν κατὰ τὰς γραφάς
 (1a) καὶ ὅτι ἐτάφη καὶ
 (2) ὅτι ἐγήγερται τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ κατὰ τὰς γραφάς
 (2a) καὶ ὅτι ὥφθη Κηφᾶ [εἶτα τοῖς δώδεκα].

This distichic formula (1+2) denotes Christ's death and resurrection as the essential content of faith; in addition two complementary lines (1a+2a) are intercalated as confirmation of Christ's burial and epiphanies, thus creating a seemingly tetrastichic formula. This *Pistis*-formula that by all likelihood was used in baptismal catechism⁴⁵ is older than 1 Corinthians and had been received as tradition by Paul. He has given it as an essential (ἐν πρώτοις) tradition⁴⁶ to the Corinthians at an earlier occasion, possibly when founding the congregation (ὁ καὶ παρελάβετε . . . ἐν πρώτοις).⁴⁷ In 1 Corinthians he uses it as "reminder" (cf. γνωρίζω) and basis for his argumentation for the belief in the resurrection of the dead.⁴⁸

If we take a closer look at Paul's description of what happens with the believer in baptism, we will soon discover the close parallelism to the *Pistis*-formula in 1 Cor 15.⁴⁹ With W. Kramer we are thus

⁴⁴ See, e.g., W. Kramer, *Christus—Kyrios—Gottessohn* (AThANT 44; Zurich: Zwingli, 1963) 15–40; K. Wengst, *Christologische Formeln und Lieder des Urchristentums* (StNT 7; Gütersloh: Mohn, 1972) 92–104; Conzelmann, "Zur Analyse der Bekenntnisformel 1. Kor. 15, 3–5" (*idem*, *Theologie als Schriftauslegung* [BEvTh 65], Munich: Kaiser, 1974) 131–41; *idem*, *1 Corinthians*, 251–57; *idem*, *Grundriß der Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (UTB 1446; 5th ed. by A. Lindemann; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1992) 50f.; Thyen, *Sündenvergebung* 152–54; Strecker *Theologie* 80–82; Wolff, *Korinther* 355–70; Lindemann, *1. Korintherbrief* 328–33; Schrage, *Der erster Brief an die Korinther (1Kor 15,1–16,24)* (EKK VII/4; Zurich: Benziger; Neukirchen: Neukirchener, 2001) 18ff.

⁴⁵ Thus Kramer, *Christus* 59f.; Vielhauer, *Geschichte* 21f.; so also Wolff, *Korinther* 360f.; otherwise Lindemann, *1. Korintherbrief* 330; undecided Schrage, *1. Korinther (VII/4)* 18.

⁴⁶ Thus esp. Schrage, *1. Korinther (VII/4)* 31f.

⁴⁷ So also Lindemann, *1. Korintherbrief* 330.

⁴⁸ Cf. Schrage, *1. Korinther (VII/4)* 27, 72.

⁴⁹ So already A. Seeberg, *Der Katechismus der Urchristenheit* (Leipzig: Deichert, 1903; repr. Munich: Kaiser, 1966) 52ff., 176; further E. Larsson, *Christus als Vorbild. Eine Untersuchung zu den paulinischen Tauf- und Eikontexten* (ASNU 23; Lund: Gleerup, 1962) 56, and G. Wagner, *Das religionsgeschichtliche Problem* 302; N. Gäumann, *Taufe* 61–65; E. Lohse, "Wort und Sakrament in der paulinischen Theologie" (*Zu Karl Barths Lehre von der Taufe*; ed. by F. Vierung, Gütersloh: Mohn, 1971) 44–59, 50; Thyen,

justified in stating: “Die Erörterung der Bedeutung der Taufe in R[öm] 6, 2–9 ist ja nichts anderes als die Aufarbeitung der *Pistis*-formel.”⁵⁰

1 Cor 15:3–5

1 ὅτι Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν . . .
1a καὶ ὅτι ἐτάφη καὶ

2 ὅτι ἐγήγερται . . .
2a καὶ ὅτι ὤφθη Κηφᾶ
[εἶτα τοῖς δώδεκα]

Romans 6:3–4

εἰς τὸν θάνατον αὐτοῦ ἐβαπτίσθημεν;
συνετάφημεν οἶν αὐτῷ διὰ τοῦ
βαπτίσματος εἰς τὸν θάνατον,
ἵνα ὥσπερ ἠγέρθη Χριστὸς ἐκ νεκρῶν . . .
οὕτως καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐν καινότητι ζωῆς
περιπατήσωμεν.

This is the parallel structure between the *Pistis*-formula and Rom 6:3–4, i.e. the section, in which baptism is *explicitly* mentioned. Peculiar is here first of all line 2a and so in a twofold way: (a) according to the credo Christ was raised from the dead—the Christian, however, has not yet been raised with him; I will come back to this difference when discussing Paul’s argumentative strategy in Romans; (b) the *Pistis*-formula’s line 2a with its statement about the epiphany is the actual proof of Christ’s resurrection just as his burial is the proof of his death. In Romans, line 1a, Christ’s and the believer’s burial is the proof of the reality of death, while the proof of the believers participation in Christ’s resurrection is not explained ontologically but rather ethically; thus the proof that the baptized believer shares in Christ’s resurrection is in fact his new way of living.

In Galatians 3 Paul cites a pre-Pauline baptismal formula. The question now is, whether he is doing the same also in Romans 6, or whether he simply formulates the believer’s union of fate with Christ in his own words in close connection with the *Pistis*-formula and thus introduces a completely new understanding of baptism in his letter to the Roman Church(es)? This question is difficult to answer in so far as Paul—for argumentative reasons—here seems to have broken up a baptismal confession, built on the *Pistis*-formula, which has to be reconstructed.⁵¹ In his commentary to Romans W.

Sündenvergebung 202f.; Hellholm, “Argumentation” 157, 161; H. Klein, “Die Gegenwart des neuen Lebens in der Sicht des Apostels Paulus,” *Im Kraftfeld des Evangeliums. Festschrift für Hermann Binder*, ed. by H. Klein and H. Pitters (Beihefte der “Kirchlichen Blätter” 3; Sibiu-Hermannstadt: Landeskonsistorium der Evangelischen Kirche in Rumänien, 1981) 61–80, 64.

⁵⁰ Kramer, *Christus* 24, 60.

⁵¹ Cf. also Vollenweider, *Freiheit* 328 who, however, doubts that Paul is quoting a formula.

Schmithals has made an attempt at reconstructing a baptismal tradition which Paul here is utilizing, i.e. vv. 3 and 8.⁵²

Another attempt at reconstructing the pre-Pauline baptismal tradition from the extant text of Romans 6 is my own suggestion which contains the following verses beginning with the correlative pronoun ὅσος:⁵³

- 1 ὅσοι ἐβαπτίσθημεν εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν,
εἰς τὸν θάνατον αὐτοῦ ἐβαπτίσθημεν (v. 3)
συνετάφημεν οὖν αὐτῷ διὰ τοῦ βαπτίσματος
εἰς τὸν θάνατον· (v. 4a)
- 2 εἰ δὲ ἀπεθάνομεν σὺν Χριστῷ,
πιστεύομεν ὅτι καὶ συζήσομεν αὐτῷ (v. 8)
εἰ γὰρ σύμφυτοι γεγόναμεν τῷ ὁμοιώματι τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ,
ἀλλὰ καὶ [τῷ ὁμοιώματι] τῆς ἀναστάσεως ἐσόμεθα. (v. 5)

Firstly, in addition to v. 3 I have included also v. 4a as part of the pre-Pauline tradition with regard to the death motif because of the reference to the burial motif.⁵⁴ Secondly, with regard to the resurrection motif I have not only included v. 8 but also v. 5⁵⁵ because of the apparent parallelism, esp. in view of the two verbs in the future tense: συζήσομεν (v. 8) and ἐσόμεθα (v. 5).⁵⁶ These two verb-forms do indeed cause some difficulties as far as Paul's procedure

⁵² W. Schmithals, *Der Römerbrief. Ein Kommentar* (Gütersloh: Mohn, 1988) 191. Cf. Hellholm, "Argumentation" 161. For 6:3a and/or 6:3b as part of a pre-Pauline tradition, see, i.a., Bultmann, *Theologie* 143f.; Thyen, *Sündenvergebung* 202; Käsemann, *An die Römer* (HNT 8a; 3rd ed.; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1974) 157; P. Sieber, *Mit Christus leben. Eine Studie zur paulinischen Auferstehungshoffnung* (ATHANT 61; Zurich: Theologischer Verlag, 1971) 191ff., 217f.; Schnelle, *Gerechtigkeit* 76. For 6:8 as a pre-Pauline tradition, see further F. Hahn, "Taufe und Rechtfertigung. Ein Beitrag zur paulinischen Theologie in ihrer Vor- und Nachgeschichte," *Rechtfertigung. Festschrift für E. Käsemann*, ed. by J. Friedrich, W. Pöhlmann, and P. Stuhlmacher (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1976) 95–124, 109; so also Dunn, *Romans 1–8* 322. See further below note 56.

⁵³ F. Blass – A. Debrunner, *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch* (14th ed., Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1976) §304,3: ὅσοι = πάντες οἱ. Vielhauer, *Geschichte* 12. Still another attempt at reconstructing a pre-Pauline tradition is made by Hans Klein, building, however, on the present resurrection statements in Col 2:12 and 3:1 ("Gegenwart" 78 note 8).

⁵⁴ For v. 4a as traditional, see also Schnelle, *ibid.*, 76; H. Umbach, *In Christus getauft—von der Sünde befreit* (FRLANT 181; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999) 242, 247.

⁵⁵ V. 5 is also part of Prof. Klein's reconstruction, see above note 53. V. 8: σύμφυτοι is in the NT singular, and ὁμοίωμα occurs precisely also in the pre-Pauline "hymn" Phil 2:6–11, v. 7; cf. Rom 8:3; see R.C. Tannehill, *Dying and Rising with Christ* (BZNW 32; Berlin: A. Töpelmann, 1966) 35–6.

⁵⁶ See U. Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer (Röm 6–11)* (EKK VI/2; Zurich: Benziger;

in arguing his case in this chapter is concerned as will be shown later. This is a further reason for assessing these verses as traditional statements. I have also changed the order between verses 5 and 8, due to the meta-communicative formulation: πιστεύομεν ὅτι . . ., which connects directly to the creed and its *Pistis*-formula.⁵⁷ We should also notice that “sin” (ἁμαρτία) is not even hinted at in the reconstructed baptismal formula; only in Paul’s own argumentation does ἁμαρτία play a role, and in fact the major role. The theme of this baptismal formula is—as the σύν-statements not only in 5a, and 8b, but also in 4a clearly indicate—“the common fate between Christ and the baptized,” not “the remission of sin(s),” which in the “baptismal credo” would complicate the parallelism with Christ (see Phil 2:8, Rom 5:19, 2 Cor 5:2.^{57a} The σύν-statements in both the *negatively* formulated stanza (1) and in the *positively* formulated stanza (2) is an additional reason for the above given reconstruction of the pre-Pauline baptismal tradition in this chapter.⁵⁸

If Schmithals’ or my own suggestion are accepted, then we have here a further testimony as to the way in which Paul makes traditional material the basis for his argumentation just as he did, e.g., in Gal 3 and in 1 Cor 1, 11 and 15 respectively.⁵⁹

What is striking here in Romans 6 is the language of union of fate between Christ and the baptized Christian. In the near context Paul has already pointed out that all Christians who have died from sin, no longer (ἔτι) can live in sin (v. 2). When he in vv. 3ff. takes up the baptismal tradition he does not mention “sin” until he brings it up in v. 6. Baptism evidently functions as a corroborative of the Christian’s death from sin just as Christ’s burial served as a *signum necessarium*. This *signum*, however, can hardly be understood as an αἷτιον, a *causa*.⁶⁰ Rather baptism is the sign of the fact that the old human being is dead as far as his/her former life is concerned, just

Neukirchen: Neukirchener, 1980) 15. Cf. also 2 Tim 2:11(–13): εἰ γὰρ συναπεθάνομεν, καὶ συζήσομεν with the future tense συζήσομεν. See also 1 Thess 4:17 and 5:10 with the remarks by Hahn, “Taufe und Rechtfertigung” 110 with note 58.

⁵⁷ Kramer, *Christus* 15–40. Cf. also Schmithals, *Römerbrief* 191.

^{57a} R. Bultmann, *Zweiter Korintherbrief* (KEK; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1976) 166–7.

⁵⁸ Regarding the σύν-statements and their tradition-historical differentiation in eschatological, sacramental, and suffering concepts, see Schnelle, *Gerechtigkeit* 206 note 397.

⁵⁹ See K. Wegenast, *Das Verhältnis der Tradition bei Paulus und in den Deuteropaulinen* (WMANT 8; Neukirchen: Neukirchener, 1962), and Conzelmann, *Schriftauslegung, passim*; Conzelmann and Lindemann, *Grundriß* 46–57, 178–81.

⁶⁰ Against Schnelle, *Gerechtigkeit* 206 note 396.

as Christ's burial is a sign of his death, not, however, its cause: thus, every time someone has been baptized, one can conclude that that person is dead from his/her former life, since his/her death is confirmed through baptism. In v. 4a we encounter the implication that the Christians' death and burial (from their former life!) would not be possible, if Christ had not died and been buried. This is the *negative* aspect!

Only in the next part of the traditional formula do we encounter the *positive* aspect: the Christians' life with Christ.⁶¹ Again the union of fate between Christ and the baptized Christian is emphasized by means of the σύν-expressions. However, here the parallelism between Christ and the Christians is partly broken insofar as Christ has been raised from the dead while the Christians still live in hope that they shall live with him (v. 8) and be united with his resurrection (v. 5). This brake in the parallelism has been explained in different ways: (a) the future tense is to be interpreted as logical future,⁶² in which case no brake in fact exists; (b) the future tense is to be understood as an eschatological restriction in view of the pneumatic-enthusiastic phenomena Paul has encountered in Corinth from where he wrote the letter to the Romans.⁶³ None of these interpretations is satisfactory. I will discuss the reasons why, when I turn to the Pauline argumentation in Romans 6. If Schmithals or I am right in our reconstructions of a pre-Pauline baptismal tradition in this chapter, then the formulations in the future tense were already a part of the tradition—a tradition influenced by eschatological conceptions—that was aware of the difference between Christ's resurrection and the Christians' hope of being part of that resurrection one day. This is truly a problem for Paul in his argumentation in Romans.

If baptism was a part of becoming a Christian, namely the *rite*, then there can be no doubt that the creed and credence constituted

⁶¹ See below note 136.

⁶² Thus, e.g., Schnackenburg, *Das Heilsgeschehen bei der Taufe nach dem Apostel Paulus. Eine Studie zur paulinischen Theologie* (MThS I/1; Munich: Zink, 1950) 33; J. Schneider, *Die Taufe im Neuen Testament* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1952) 47; Larsson, *Christus als Vorbild* 70f.; Beasley-Murray, *Baptism* 139; Thyen, *Sündenvergebung* 206ff.; Schlier, *Der Römerbrief* (HThK 6; Freiburg: Herder, 1977) 196; Fitzmyer, *Romans* (AB 33) (New York: Doubleday, 1993) 435. Otherwise, e.g., Gäumann, *Taufe* 79; Schnelle, *Gerechtigkeit* 83; Wilckens, *Römer (6–11)* 15, 18; Käsemann, *Römer* 161; Dunn, *Romans 1–8* 318.

⁶³ Thus, esp. Conzelmann, "Die Schule des Paulus," *Theologia Crucis—Signum Crucis*. FS E. Dinkler, ed. by C. Andresen and G. Klein (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1979) 85–96, 91. For a more correct assessment, see Hahn, "Taufe und Rechtfertigung" 110.

its counterpart, i.e. the *myth*.⁶⁴ The close relationship between the two parts of the cult has hopefully become obvious from my deliberations so far.⁶⁵ As Betz rightly has emphasized there are close similarities with the mystery religions in this regard.⁶⁶

Most conceivable is the interpretation that connects to the “fact that . . . [ὁμοίωμα] is regularly used to denote the form of transcendent reality perceptible to man,”⁶⁷ which means that the phrase εἰ γὰρ σύμφυτοι γεγόναμεν τῷ ὁμοιώματι τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ implies that the fusion (σύμφυτοι) “is with the likeness of Christ’s death (which is equivalent to fusion with Christ in his death . . . , but not to fusion with Christ by means of the likeness of his death).”⁶⁸ This interpretation also means that a direct reference to baptism in the resurrection part of the formula is missing.

The kind of statement that is expressed in this formula takes on a double meaning: *a simile* and *a modo*.⁶⁹ As a statement of *similarity* it signifies the parallelism: Christ died—we have died; Christ was raised—we shall be raised. As a statement of *relation* it signifies the way in which Christ’s and our destiny are related: Christ died—and we *with* (σύν) him; Christ was raised—and we shall be raised *with* (σύν) him. The difference, however, between Christ and the Christian is expressed precisely by means of the lexeme ὁμοίωμα: here lies a moment of distance!⁷⁰

In Romans 6 there is no reference to “baptism into the name of the Lord Jesus” (cf. 1 Cor 1:13, 15) or to baptism “as an act of ‘clothing,’ whereby Christ is understood as the garment” (Gal 3:27).⁷¹ What is common to the “baptismal pronouncement” in Galatians and the “baptismal credence” in Romans is the formulation: βαπτισθῆναι εἰς Χριστόν.⁷² This formulation is in a way distinctively different

⁶⁴ Cf. hereto Hartman, ‘*Into the Name*’ 3–8.

⁶⁵ Cf. also Dahl, “The Concept of Baptism in Ephesians” (*idem*, *Studies in Ephesians*, 413–39) 420: “It is clear that baptism was accompanied by words (it was not a silent ritual).”

⁶⁶ Betz, “Ritual” 86–100, esp. 97f.

⁶⁷ Dunn, *Romans 1–8* 316f. with references i.a. to Plato, *Parm.* 1321 and *Phaed.* 250B, to LXX Exod 20:4; Deut 4:12; Ezek 1:4–5 etc., and to Philo *Migr.* 48–49.

⁶⁸ Dunn, *Romans 1–8* 318; similarly Schmithals, *Römerbrief* 192.

⁶⁹ See Hellholm, “Argumentation” 161f. Cf. also W. A. Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul* (New Haven: Yale University, 1983) 154.

⁷⁰ So also Wilckens, *Römer (6–11)* 13f.; Schnelle, *Gerechtigkeit* 82; Strecker, *Theologie* 174.

⁷¹ Betz, *Galatians* 187.

⁷² A correct interpretation in my opinion is put forth by I. de la Potterie,

from the formulation εἰς τὸ ὄνομα and yet it is not in contradiction to the "name-formula."⁷³

As already indicated, the formula used in Romans 6 is *form-critically* to be characterized as a "baptismal credo."⁷⁴ As far as the question of a *specific Sitz im Leben* is concerned we can make the following observation: If the *Pistis*-formula quoted in 1 Cor 15 was part of the *catechetical instruction* as Kramer, Vielhauer and others assume, and the "name-formula" was used in connection with the performance of the baptismal rite, then it is obvious that the "baptismal credo" of Rom 6:3–4a, 8, 5 was pronounced by the newly baptized after the baptismal rite had been performed: "We all who have been baptized to Christ. . . ." It is significant to realize that this "baptismal credo" is formulated in the 1st person plural contrary to the "baptismal pronouncement" quoted by Paul in Galatians (3:26–28). While the "pronouncement" quoted in Galatians was by all likelihood enunciated by the baptizer himself or an assistant (as later e.g., by bishop or presbyter) after baptism,⁷⁵ the "credo" quoted in Romans 6 was pronounced by the baptized believers themselves likewise after the performance of the rite.⁷⁶ If my analysis holds true, this provides a still further insight into the liturgical performances in connection with baptism at a very early stage of the Christian Church!

This means that also here we detect (1) a different structure, (2) a different terminology, (3) different conceptions regarding baptism and its effect, and (4) a partly different function in the *specific Sitz im Leben* than in the baptismal texts from 1 Corinthians 1 and Galatians 3. From this undisputable fact Betz concludes that Paul's understanding of baptism has radically changed, so that only in Romans 6 do we encounter his fully developed baptismal concept and so not only

"Discussion" (*Battesimo e giustizia in Rom 6 e 8* (Serie Monografica di 'Benedictina'; Serie biblico-ecumenica 2); Roma: Abbazia, 1974) 106: "Pour bien comprendre la formule βαπτίζειν εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν, . . . , il est nécessaire de s'interroger sur sa provenance. Elle serait la transposition d'une ancienne formule de foi: πιστεῦεν εἰς Χριστόν. . . . La foi nous unit au Christ; le sens de εἰς n'est donc pas local mais personnel. Il en va de même pour la formule baptismale. . . . L'expression a donc tout ensemble un sens dynamique et personnel: tout comme la foi, le baptême unit au Christ."

⁷³ See above note 28. See hereto also de la Potterie, *ibid.*, 113.

⁷⁴ See below note 76.

⁷⁵ See above note 38.

⁷⁶ Cf. Schmithals, *Römerbrief* 191: "Anscheinend haben wir es mit einem 'Taufspruch' zu tun, vielleicht mit einem liturgischen Stück aus dem Taufgottesdienst, das etwa nach vollzogener Taufe von den Täuflingen gesprochen worden sein könnte."

with regard to content but also with regard to his attitude towards baptism as such. Again, not the facts themselves, but Professor Betz's conclusions, however, seem to me to be untenable as I will try to show below. First, however, it is necessary to deal with the situational contexts of 1 Corinthians, Galatians, and Romans respectively.

2. *The Situational Contexts of the Pauline Letters: The Pragmatic Presuppositions*

In this chapter the interpreter is faced with the problem of reconstructing pragmatic presuppositions.⁷⁷ In the original communication situation this was less of a problem, since sender, addressees and adversaries in most cases knew (or at least thought they knew) each other's positions. When establishing the presuppositions the modern interpreter has methodically to take *text-internal* indications as well as *text-external* information into account.⁷⁸ Thus, *text-internal* as well as *text-external* observations of different kinds will be used in reconstructing the pragmatic situations that constitute Paul's presuppositions when writing his letters to these three congregations.⁷⁹

The Corinthian Situation

Under the supposition of the unity of 1 Corinthians⁸⁰ it is pertinent first to deal with the question of the letter's genre and secondly to address the question of the form and function of the first four chapters in this letter in order to reconstruct the pragmatic situation behind the letter.

⁷⁷ Cf. H. Koester, *Introduction to the New Testament, Vol. 2: History and Literature of Early Christianity* (2nd ed.; Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 2000) 123; see also C. J. Classen, "Paulus und die antike Rhetorik," *ZNW* 82 (1991) 7–8. This must be maintained in defence of what is called "mirror reading" by i.a. Mitchell, *Reconciliation* 54f. and in particular G. Lyons, *Pauline Autobiography. Toward a New Understanding* (SBLDS 73; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985) 96–105.

⁷⁸ For this differentiation, see Hellholm, *Visionenbuch* 43, 80ff.

⁷⁹ Cf. for the *text-internal* approach Mitchell, *ibid.*, 72; for the *text-internal* and *-external* approach J. S. Vos, "Die Argumentation des Paulus in 1 Kor 1,10–34," *The Corinthian Correspondence*, ed. by R. Bieringer (BETL 125; Leuven: Peeters, 1996) 87–119, 87.

⁸⁰ For an overview of different partition theories, see Betz and Mitchell, "Corinthians, First Epistle to" 1142f.; Mitchell, "Korintherbriefe" (*RGG* 4th ed.; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001) 4. 1688–94; cf. also D. Trobisch, *Die Entstehung der Paulusbriefsammlung* (NTOA 10; Freiburg: Universitätsverlag; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1989) 119–28.

Regarding the genre there seems to be a consensus that rhetorically it is either to be defined as *deliberative*⁸¹ or as *generically mixed*.⁸² In either case the deliberative aspect is dominant in this letter and thus it is directed towards a change of the situation in the Corinthian Church, primarily by means of hortatory or admonitory sections.⁸³ It is, as Margaret Mitchell has emphasized, certainly most important to discern the genre of a text as a whole.⁸⁴ This by no means, however, excludes the possibility of other generic text-sequences being utilized in different sections of the letter. The rhetorical genres rarely appear in pure form but mostly mixed.⁸⁵

In a complex communication situation the author might find it necessary to apply different genres in order to achieve his goal and the more sophisticated the author is, the more likely he is to utilize as many of the rhetorical means as he finds necessary and is able to handle.⁸⁶ The rhetorical genres were in ancient rhetorical praxis less strictly distinguished from each other than in theory.⁸⁷ An important aspect in deliberative rhetoric is the qualification of the orator,⁸⁸ which under certain circumstances inevitably will lead to selfdefence and apology.

⁸¹ Thus Mitchell, *Reconciliation*, esp. 20–64 (= chap. II) and *passim*; G. A. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation Through Rhetorical Criticism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1984) 87.

⁸² Schrage, *1. Korinther (VII/1)* 86–90. See Ps.-Libanios, “Epistolary Styles” A. J. Malherbe, *Ancient Epistolary Theorists* ([SBLBS 19], Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988) 72f., 6 (45): μικτή δὲ ἦν ἐκ διαφόρων χαρακτήρων συνιστώμεν. “The mixed type is that which we compose from many characteristics/styles”; see in addition the specifications given *ibid.*, 80f., 37–41 (92). Cf. in particular R. Brucker, ‘Christushymnen’ oder ‘epideiktische Passagen’? (FRLANT 176; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1997) 174–210; furthermore also Betz’s characterization of 2 Cor 8, where vv. 1–15 are said to be “advisory,” while vv. 16–22 are said to be “administrative” (H. D. Betz, *2 Corinthians 8 and 9* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985) 139.

⁸³ Thus also Schrage, *1. Korinther (VII/1)* 88ff.

⁸⁴ Thus Mitchell, *Reconciliation* 16.

⁸⁵ Quintilian, *Inst. or.*, 3. 8, 55. See further [Cicero], *Rhet. Her.*, 3. 4, 7. Cf. S. Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity* (LEC; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986) 51–2; Hellholm, “Argumentation” 129–30; H. Lausberg, *Handbuch der literarischen Rhetorik* (2nd ed.; Munich: Hueber 1973) 132 [§ 243]; D. E. Aune, “Review H. D. Betz, *Galatians* . . .” *RSR* 7 (1981) 323–28, 325; H. D. Betz, *Der Galaterbrief* (Hermeneia; Munich: Kaiser 1988), 2; Brucker, ‘Christushymnen’ 300 *et passim*.

⁸⁶ Cf. also Betz, *2 Corinthians 8 and 9* 130f.

⁸⁷ See, e.g., Quintilian, *Inst. or.*, 3. 4, 15–16. Cf. J. Engels, “Genera causarum” (*HWR*, ed. by G. Ueding, Vol. 3; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft) 1996, 701–21, 702; Brucker, ‘Christushymnen’ 174–252.

⁸⁸ Quintilian *Inst. or.* 3. 8, 12, 13, 48; further Aristotle, *Ars Rhet.*, 1. 2, 3–4; Cicero, *De Orat.* 2. 333. See also Hellholm, “Argumentation” 127, 129; Mitchell, *Reconciliation* 45f.; H.-J. Schild, “Beratungsrede” (*HWR*, Vol. 1, 1992, 1441–54) esp. 1443f.

The nearest co-text of the pre-Pauline “name-formula” conjectured in 1 Cor 1:14–17 is the section 1:10–4:21 with the beginning and closing *παρακαλῶ*-sentences in 1:10 and 4:16.⁸⁹ Presupposing the integrity of 1 Corinthians, the function of this section within the extant letter has to be established. With N. A. Dahl it should be understood as “an introductory section,” in which Paul “had first of all to make it clear that he did not speak as the champion of one group but as the apostle of Christ, as the founder and spiritual father of the whole congregation. The first section, chapters 1–4, is therefore a necessary part of the total structure of the letter and has a preparatory function . . . Paul had first of all to urge the Corinthians to agree and be of one mind.”⁹⁰ Many scholars, prior to Dahl and after him, have characterized this text-sequence as apologetic and rightly so in view of the *ἔριδες* and *σχίσματα* (cf. 1:10f.; 4:1–6, 18),⁹¹ since the *σχίσματα* are not only the result of the *ἔριδες* between different groups within the Corinthian congregation but also between these groups and Paul.⁹² The problem has partly to do with the lacking authority of the apostle.⁹³ From 4:18 it becomes clear that although

⁸⁹ This delimitation of a section of 1 Corinthians is generally accepted, see, e.g., N. A. Dahl, “Paul and the Church at Corinth according to 1 Corinthians 1:10–4:21” (*Christian History and Interpretation: Studies presented to John Knox*, ed. by W. R. Farmer, C. F. D. Moule, R. R. Niebuhr, Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1967) 313–35; Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians* 30ff.; Schrage, *1. Korinther (VII/1)* 90, 127ff., 133; Wolff, *1. Korinther* 24ff.; Lindemann, *1. Korintherbrief* VIIIf., 7f., 33ff. A somewhat different delimitation from a rhetorical perspective is found in Mitchell, *Reconciliation* 198–202, 207–25; Betz and Mitchell, “Corinthians, First Epistle to,” 1143. See also G. Sellin, “Das ‘Geheimnis der Weisheit und das Rätsel der ‘Christuspartei’ (zu 1 Kor 1–4),” *ZNW* 73 (1982) 69–96, 72f.: chapters 1–4 is a separate letter.

⁹⁰ Dahl, “Paul” 317 and 326. See also L. L. Welborn, “Discord in Corinth: First Corinthians 1–4 and Ancient Politics,” *idem, Politics and Rhetoric in the Corinthian Epistles* (Macon, GA: Mercer, 1997) 6; Mitchell, *Reconciliation* 66f.

⁹¹ So, e.g., Dahl, “Paul” *passim*, esp. 317, 320; Vielhauer, “Paulus und die Kephaspartei in Korinth,” *Oikodome. Aufsätze zum Neuen Testament*, ed. G. Klein (ThB 65; Munich: Kaiser, 1979) 169–82, 171; Sellin, “Das ‘Geheimnis’ der Weisheit” 74ff., 79; Schrage, “Das apostolische Amt des Paulus nach 1 Kor 4,14–17” (*L’Apôtre Paul. Personnalité, style et conception du ministère*, ed. by A. Vanhoye (BETHL 78; Leuven: Peeters, 1986, 103–19) 103; *idem*, *1. Korinther (VII/1)* 93, 128–33; Vos, “Argumentation” 88ff., 119; somewhat reluctantly Lindemann, *1. Korintherbrief* 33; deliberative by L. L. Welborn, “Discord in Corinth” 7, and Mitchell, *Reconciliation* 16 note 54. The rejection of Dahl’s interpretation of 1 Cor 4:1–5 as apologetic (Dahl, *ibid.*, 321) by Mitchell, *ibid.*, 55 is unwarranted; see the justified criticism of Mitchell by Vos, “Argumentation” 89 with note 4; so also Sellin, “Das ‘Geheimnis’ der Weisheit” 75; similarly Lindemann, *1. Korintherbrief* 95.

⁹² Cf. Vos, “Argumentation” 88.

⁹³ See, e.g., Vos, “Argumentation” 89.

Paul is addressing the whole congregation, he evidently regards "some special persons" (τινες) as being "arrogant" (ἐφυσιώθησαν).⁹⁴

It is in this connection that the slogans reported in 1:12 can best be understood, Dahl maintains, when he writes: "Since the entire section contains an apology for Paul, and the strife at Corinth was linked up with opposition against him, it becomes fairly easy to interpret the slogans reported in 1:12."⁹⁵ Dahl's interpretation of the slogans is still the most convincing attempt at explicating these phrases: "Those who said 'I belong to *Paul*' were proud of him and held that his excellence surpassed that of Apollos or Cephas. The other slogans are all to be understood as declarations of independence from Paul. *Apollos* is mentioned as the most outstanding Christian teacher who had visited Corinth after Paul. *Cefas* is the famous pillar, the first witness to the resurrection, an apostle before Paul. The slogan 'I belong to *Christ*' is not the motto of a specific 'Christ-party' but simply means 'I belong myself to Christ—and am independent of Paul'." What is so impressive with Dahl's interpretation is the fact that hereby "all the slogans [including esp. the 'Christ-slogan'—DH] give a clear meaning in the context and in the situation."⁹⁶

The official attitude of the congregation is brought forth by a letter indicating on the one hand the loyalty to the apostle (11:2), but at the same time asking him for his opinion on a number of questions. By all likelihood the letter was delivered by Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus as official delegates of the Corinthian congregation. Unofficially, however, "Chloe's people could orally report that there was a strife in Corinth and that there was some opposition against Paul."⁹⁷ The way in which Stephanas is mentioned first at the beginning of chap. 1, where Paul corrects himself by adding that he also baptized the household of Stephanas, and then also in the last chapter is important. In 16:15–18 Paul urges the Corinthians to "be subject to such men" as Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus and to "give recognition to such men." Dahl concludes, and rightly so, that this "double emphasis gives some reason to suspect that not everybody in Corinth was inclined to pay due recognition to Stephanas, his household, and his fellow delegates," who were "the first converts

⁹⁴ Cf. Dahl, "Paul" 318.

⁹⁵ Dahl, "Paul" 322.

⁹⁶ Dahl, "Paul" 322; cf. 2 Cor 10:7.

⁹⁷ Dahl, "Paul" 323.

in Achaia (v. 15).” He even venture the hypothesis that “the quarrelling Corinthians were opposing Stephanas as much as they were opposing Paul.”⁹⁸

It is in this connection we have to see Paul’s use of the “name-formula” in 1:13ff. as will be shown below.

The Galatian Situation

The Letter to the Galatians has in my opinion rightly been characterized as mainly apologetic.⁹⁹ So already by John Chrysostom as Margaret Mitchell recently has shown.¹⁰⁰ This is certainly a correct assessment as far as the overall structure of Galatians is concerned, which, however, does not exclude the occurrence of deliberative text-sequences as has been affirmed also by Betz.¹⁰¹ In contrast to 1 Corinthians which is a deliberative letter with apologetic elements, Galatians is an apologetic letter with deliberative elements.¹⁰²

By accident, that is, because of his illness (Gal 4:13), Paul came to preach the Gospel to the Galatians.¹⁰³ After Paul left Galatia the

⁹⁸ Dahl, “Paul” 324.

⁹⁹ So esp. Betz, “Literary Composition” 353–79; *idem*, *Galatians 14 et passim*; similarly Becker, *Galater* 11–12. The objections hereto and the claims of the “deliberative genre,” see, i.a., D. E. Aune, “Review” 323–28; G. Hallbäck, “Jerusalem og Antiokia i Gal. 2. En historisk hypotese,” *DTT* 53 (1990) 300–16, *passim*. Cf. also Martyn, *Galatians* 21; Schnelle, *Einleitung* 125. Further H. Hübner, *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (2 vols.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993) 2.57–8.

¹⁰⁰ M. M. Mitchell, “Reading Rhetoric with Patristic Exegetes. John Chrysostom on Galatians,” *Antiquity and Humanity. Essays on Ancient Religion and Philosophy: Presented to Hans Dieter Betz on His 70th Birthday*, ed. A. Y. Collins and M. M. Mitchell (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2001) 333–55, esp. 349f. In his commentary on Galatians John Chrysostom regularly uses the lexemes ἀπολογεῖσθαι and ἀπολογία, see Mitchell, *ibid.*, 350–53. Cf. S. A. Cooper “*Narratio* and *Exhortatio* in Galatians According to Marius Victorinus Rhetor,” *ZNW* 91 (2000) 107–35, who “observe(s) how Victorinus’ exegesis could seem to support a reading of Galatians as deliberative rhetoric” (*ibid.*, 112), and yet has to concede the “unwillingness” of Victorinus “to identify Galatians with a specific rhetorical genre” (*ibid.*, 133). Cautious, in spite of his criticism of Betz, is Lyons, *Pauline Autobiography* 112–21.

¹⁰¹ H. D. Betz, “Galatians, Epistle to the,” *ABD* (6 vols.; New York: Doubleday, 1992) 2.872–75: “The rhetoric of the letter is, on the whole, of the judicial type (*genus iudiciale*), but the element of dissuasion is also present (*genus deliberativum*). The two genres correlate here as they do in other texts” (p. 873); *idem*, *Der Galaterbrief* 2: “Im Blick auf den Galaterbrief sei wenigstens so viel gesagt, daß das Genre des apologetischen Briefes Elemente beratender Funktion keineswegs ausschließt.” Cf. already *idem*, *Galatians* 213: Paul’s “goal is, of course, to change the Galatians’s mind and to reverse their present plans.”

¹⁰² See above notes 85–88.

¹⁰³ Cf. Vielhauer, *Geschichte* 109; H. Schlier, *Der Brief an die Galater* (KEK 7;

situation changed rapidly, due to the influct of Judaizers, who demanded of the Galatian Christians that they keep the law and have themselves circumcised. Thus, these Judaizers threatened to tear the Galatian Christians away from Paul.¹⁰⁴ In view of their turning away from him and the gospel he preached, Paul even curses them in 1:9: "If anyone is proclaiming to you a gospel contrary to that which you have received, let him be accursed."¹⁰⁵ Evidently the Galatians were on their way of turning away from Paul and his law-free gospel and following the Pauline opposition. For that reason Paul does not give thanks to God for the congregation as he does in his other letters, but expresses his astonishment that they "so rapidly had defected from the God who had called them" (1:6), and characterises the Galatians as "foolish" and "bewitched" (3:1).¹⁰⁶ The letter as a whole is an apology for Paul, not as an individual but as an apostle of Christ, and for his *kerygma*. The gospel is not only for Jews, but also for Gentiles. This means that non-Jews do not have to become Jews before becoming Christians.¹⁰⁷ The propaganda by the Judaizers is sharply rejected by Paul. Thereby he urges the Galatians to abide with the *kerygma* they accepted when he preached the Gospel in Galatia for the first time and they obtained the Holy Spirit.¹⁰⁸ This is in concise form the background for Paul's use of the "baptismal pronouncement" tradition in Galatians 3:26–28.

The Roman Situation

Paul's letter to the Romans is written to a congregation which is unknown to him and he unknown to a majority of its members. If

Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1962) 210; Betz, *Galatians* 224. Undecided Becker, *Galater* 68. differently Vouga, *Galater* 108.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Vielhauer, *Geschichte* 113–24; H.-M. Schenke and K. M. Fischer, *Einleitung in die Schriften des Neuen Testaments. I: Die Briefe des Paulus und Schriften des Paulinismus* (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1978) 81–84; Betz, *Galatians* 5–9; Schnelle, *Einleitung* 126–29; Koester, *Introduction* 123–26; Martyn, *Galatians* 18–19, 117–26, 302–06; Becker, *Galater* 12–13; further Vouga, *Galater* 159–62.

¹⁰⁵ See esp. Betz, *Galatians* 50–52.

¹⁰⁶ Cf., e.g., Betz, *Galatians* 128–32; Vouga, *Galater* 65–69; Martyn, *Galatians* 282–86.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. also 1 Cor 7:17–20 and hereto esp. Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians* 125–27; Lindemann, *1. Korintherbrief* 168–71.

¹⁰⁸ See Betz, "Spirit" 145–60; *idem*, "Geist" 46–62; *idem*, "In Defense of the Spirit: Paul's Letter to the Galatians as a Document of Early Christian Apologetics" (*idem*, *Paulinische Studien*) 98–109.

chapter 16 is a part of the original letter,¹⁰⁹ then some information must have been available to him about the situation in the Roman Church or rather house-Churches.¹¹⁰ Also in this letter we do find traces of propaganda against Paul on the part of Judaizing opponents. Consequently, Paul had to defend himself and his law-free gospel also in this letter, which evidently belongs to a mixed literary-rhetorical genre.¹¹¹ At least in chapters three and six there can be no doubt that we have to do with apologetic text-sequences.

The main problem in securing the position behind the counter-arguments in chapter 6 is further complicated by the fact that the modern interpreter of the counter-arguments and of Paul's pro-argumentation for his thesis has to take his/her departure from one and the same *semantic* standpoint, *viz.* libertinism, which *pragmatically* can be ascribed either to Paul's adversaries or to their view of him and his theology:¹¹²

(1) the opponents *assert* a libertine view¹¹³—a position which Paul rejects;

(2) the opponents *accuse Paul* of libertinism¹¹⁴—an accusation which Paul rejects.

¹⁰⁹ So, e.g., H. Gamble, *The Textual History of the Letter to the Romans* (SD 42; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977); W.-H. Ollrog, "Die Abfassungsverhältnisse von Röm 16," *Kirche*. FS G. Bornkamm, ed. by D. Lührmann and G. Strecker (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1980) 221–44; P. Lampe, "The Roman Christians of Romans 16," *The Romans Debate*, ed. by K. P. Donfried (rev. edition; Peabody: Hendrickson, 1991) 216–30; Reichert, *Der Römerbrief als Gradwanderung. Eine Untersuchung zur Abfassungsproblematik* (FRLANT 194; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001) 335–42. Otherwise, e.g., N. R. Petersen, "On the Ending(s) of Paul's Letter to Rome," *The Future of Early Christianity*. FS H. Koester, ed. by B. A. Pearson (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991) 337–47; Schmithals, *Römerbrief* 543–62; D. Trobisch, *Paulusbriefsammlung* 118.

¹¹⁰ See P. Lampe, *Die stadtrömischen Christen in den ersten beiden Jahrhunderten. Untersuchungen zur Sozialgeschichte* (2nd ed.; WUNT 2.18; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1989) 58, 129, 160–62.

¹¹¹ For Romans as belonging to the *iudicial* genre, see below note 120.

¹¹² The following is built upon my article "Argumentation" 142–46.

¹¹³ So W. Lütgert, *Der Römerbrief als historisches Problem* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1913) 72ff., 111; Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans* (ICC; 2 vols.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1977) 1.297, note 1; similarly Gäumann, *Taufe* 69 note 7; P. Tachau, *'Einst' und 'Jetzt' im Neuen Testament* (FRLANT 105; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1972) 122.

¹¹⁴ So Käsemann, *Römer* 157: "Doch ist Pls nach 3,5ff. tatsächlich der Verführung zum Libertinismus beschuldigt worden, so daß man eher mit Verteidigung gegenüber einer Missdeutung der Rechtfertigungslehre zu rechnen hat"; Schlier, *Römerbrief* 190; Wilckens, *Römer* (6–11) 8–9; Conzelmann and Lindemann, *Grundriß* 326; Schmithals, *Römerbrief* 110; Lampe, *Stadtrömische Christen* 55; Vollenweider, *Freiheit* 328.

From *text-internal* evidence it is obvious that the second option is the only possible one; this is clear from Paul's quotation in 3:8 of the adversaries' accusation of his alleged blasphemous (καθὼς βλασφημούμεθα) libertine statement, "let us do evil that good may come" (ποιήσωμεν τὰ κακά, ἵνα ἔλθῃ τὰ ἀγαθά).¹¹⁵ This accusation is—as in Galatians—denied by Paul even with an oath (3:8b: ὧν τὸ κρίμα ἔδικόν ἐστιν). The same accusation is reiterated precisely in 6:1, where we read: ἐπιμένωμεν τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ, ἵνα ἡ χάρις πλεονάσῃ ("should we remain in sin, in order that grace may increase?"—as deliberative subjunctive, or "let us remain in sin, in order that grace may increase!"—as hortative subjunctive). This is the kind of opposition Paul is expecting from the Judaizing opponents, who either have infiltrated the congregation in Rome already or who Paul is expecting to infiltrate the Church there in the near future as has been suggested by Vielhauer.¹¹⁶ This is also the reason, why Paul is presenting himself and his gospel so meticulously in the *prooimion* of this letter.¹¹⁷

The *text-external* considerations point in the same direction, namely of Judaizing and/or Jewish synagogal propaganda against Paul and his law-free gospel, that was supposed to lead to lax conduct of life. Reasons for Judaizing and/or synagogal propagation lying behind Paul's argumentation in Romans are in condensed form: (a) during his stay in Ephesus Paul has had to experience, how his Churches in Galatia and Corinth has been threatened by Judaizing adversaries;¹¹⁸ (b) when writing Romans in Corinth Paul is just about to depart for Jerusalem in order to deliver the collection. How severe his situation in fact is can be discerned from Rom 15:30–32, where he first of all fears for his liquidation through the "unbelievers in Judea," i.e. the Judaizers/Jews, and secondly for the rejection of his collection on the part of the Jewish-Christian community in Jerusalem. This aspect has rightly been emphasized, although somewhat one-sidedly, by Jacob Jervell in particular;¹¹⁹ (c) apparently Paul at the

¹¹⁵ Cf. U. Luz, "Zum Aufbau von Röm. 1–8" *TZ* 25 (1969) 161–81, 169, 175; further cf. Schnelle, *Gerechtigkeit* 74; G. Theißen, *Psychologische Aspekte paulinischer Theologie* (FRLANT 131; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983) 183; B. Frid, "Römer 6,4–5" *BZ* 30 (1986) 188–203, 188; Schmithals, *Römerbrief* 110.

¹¹⁶ Vielhauer, *Geschichte* 183.

¹¹⁷ In addition to the commentaries, see now also Reichert, *Der Römerbrief* 108–18.

¹¹⁸ Cf., e.g., Betz, *Galatians, passim*; Vielhauer, *Geschichte* 113–24.

¹¹⁹ See J. Jervell, "The Letter to Jerusalem," *The Romans Debate. Revised and Expanded Edition*, ed. K. P. Donfried (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1991) 53–64.

time of writing Romans fears that the Judaizing adversaries, who have challenged him in the East either already have infiltrated or soon will infiltrate the Church in Rome;¹²⁰ (d) Paul's intent in writing Romans was in my opinion to win the Roman Church(es) for his cause, in order for Rome to serve as the basis for his mission in Spain.¹²¹

From these assumptions that are based on *text-internal* as well as *text-external* observations one has to understand the thesis of Romans as well as the line of argumentation in chapter 6.¹²² Conversely the line of argumentation in this chapter will have to confirm the supposition of Judaizing (or possibly Jewish) interlocutors in Paul's letter to the Romans.

3. *Paul's Use of Baptismal Traditions in His Argumentation: The Intra-Textual Co-Texts*

After having established the existence of the three different pre-conceived baptismal formulas used by Paul in his letters, as well as of different situations in the Churches addressed, we must now return to the question of whether it is necessary to reckon with a development in Paul's theological thinking or in his way of carrying out his argumentation? In order to answer this question, we have to conduct argumentative analyses of the three letters in question. This can be done here only on a limited scale.¹²³

Paul's Argument in 1 Corinthians

In view of the factionalism in the Corinthian congregation Paul takes issue already at the very beginning with the occurring problems, that

¹²⁰ See Vielhauer, *Geschichte* 183; further cf. also Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer* (EKK VI/1; 3 vols.; Zurich: Benziger; Neukirchen: Neukirchener, 1978) 1.33–48: "Aus der Polemik des Galaterbriefs ist im Römerbrief eine umfassende Apologie geworden . . ." (p. 48); *idem*, *Römer* 2.10; further G. Bornkamm, "Der Römerbrief als Testament des Paulus" *idem*, *Geschichte und Glaube. Zweiter Teil* (BEvTh 53; Munich: Kaiser, 1971) 120–39, 138; Becker, *Paulus. Der Apostel der Völker* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1989) 367; Lampe, "Roman Christians" 221.

¹²¹ Cf. E. Brandenburger, "Paulinische Schriftauslegung in der Kontroverse um das Verheißungswort Gottes," *ZThK* 82 (1985) 8; see also Vielhauer, *Geschichte* 183.

¹²² Cf. H. Conzelmann, "χαίρω, κτλ.," *ThWNT* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1973) 9.363–66, 377–93, 386; see Hellholm, "Argumentation" *passim*.

¹²³ For Romans 6 this has been carried out in detail in Hellholm, "Argumentation."

is, in the first four chapters. In connection with the ἔριδες and σχίσματα in Corinth, baptism evidently played a major role.¹²⁴ This is denied by i.a. Schrage and Lindemann,¹²⁵ but hardly persuasive first of all in view of its place at the very beginning of 1 Corinthians and secondly in view of the Corinthian interpretation of the eucharist in chapter 11, and of the vicarious baptism in chapter 15. In the mystery cults the mystagogue played an important role in connection with the cultic initiation in as much as he was responsible for the initiate during the ceremony.¹²⁶ Here in the Christian congregation in Corinth (not far from Eleusis!) the person performing the baptismal act apparently was the one with whom the baptized neophytes had a special bondage. Some claimed that they belonged to Paul, others to Peter and still others to Apollos.¹²⁷ These three or perhaps rather their representatives,¹²⁸ were evidently the main performers of baptism in the Corinthian Church. Christ, of course, was not performing a baptismal act, since Dahl is right in interpreting the slogan "I belong to Christ" as meaning, "I am independent of Paul."¹²⁹ *Negatively* we can conclude that some members of the Church in Corinth apparently misunderstood and misused the original baptismal formula εἰς τὸ ὄνομα. Thus, the "name-formula" was used in Corinth in connection with baptism. There is no indication that Paul opposed that formula as such, but rather its misuse and for that reason was pleased not to have baptized too many himself. This has been formulated *positively* by G. J. Steyn when he writes, "Paul's appeal for unity is based on the implicit baptismal formula which binds all of them together, i.e., that they were baptised 'in the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ'. . . . This binds them closely together, so that when

¹²⁴ See Mitchell, *Reconciliation* 87: "Thus μερίζει in 1 Cor 1:13 is perfectly synonymous with σχίσματα" in 1:10 and ἔριδες in 1:11."

¹²⁵ Schrage, *1. Korinther (VII/1)* 149, 155; Lindemann, *1. Korintherbrief* 41.

¹²⁶ See above note 18; further Sellin, "Das 'Geheimnis' der Weisheit" 74; H.-J. Klauck, *1. Korintherbrief* (Die Neue Echter Bibel; Würzburg: Echter, 1984) 22f.

¹²⁷ For Peter, see F. C. Baur, "Die Christuspartei in der korinthischen Gemeinde, der Gegensatz des paulinischen und petrinischen Christentums in der ältesten Kirche, der Apostel Petrus in Rom," *TZTh* 4 (1931) 61–206; Vielhauer, "Kephaspartei" 169–82; for Apollos: Sellin, "Das 'Geheimnis' der Weisheit" *passim*; Wolter, "Apollos" *passim*.

¹²⁸ Dahl, "Paul" 323. Cf. N. Walter, "Nikolaos, Proselyt aus Antiochien, und die Nikolaiten in Ephesus und Pergamon. Ein Beitrag auch zum Thema: Paulus und Ephesus" *ZNW* 93 (2002) 200–26, 207.

¹²⁹ Dahl, "Paul" 322.

looking back on their divisions based on other 'names', that way of reasoning looks incorrect."¹³⁰ This interpretation is further strengthened by G. Barth's statement, "Das Argument ist dazu noch um so überzeugender, je stärker Paulus sich an einen feststehenden liturgischen Brauch anlehnt, den jeder kennt und den niemand bestreitet."¹³¹

This means, however, that the baptismal tradition, which Paul uses in this letter is determined by the *situational context* in the Church at Corinth. Consequently it cannot be taken as an indication of an early, primitive understanding of baptism on the part of Paul, nor can it be taken as an indication of his desinterest in baptism at this stage. Rather, as we saw earlier, this "name-formula" was used by the baptizer in the liturgy in connection with the performance of the baptismal rite, and it is this formula that most easily could lead to the factionalists's misunderstanding of the role of the performer of the baptismal act.

Paul's Argument in Galatians

When Paul is rebuking the Judaizing Christians for demanding that the Galatians should not be content with having received the Spirit but in addition should keep the Law and have themselves circumcised, then line C in the formula (οὐκ ἔνι Ἰουδαίος οὐδὲ Ἑλλήν) makes sense while lines D (οὐκ ἔνι δοῦλος οὐδὲ ἐλεύθερος) and E (οὐκ ἔνι ἄρσεν καὶ θήλυ) in fact does not contribute much in support of his argument. Thus, our analysis above of the history of this baptismal tradition is confirmed. In addition the *inclusio* caused by lines A (Πάντες γὰρ υἱοὶ θεοῦ ἐστε [διὰ τῆς πίστεως] ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ) and F (πάντες γὰρ ὑμεῖς εἰς ἐστε ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ) is important for Paul's line of argumentation in this letter, since in the formula emphasis is laid on the fellowship of *all* Christians. In order to rebuke the propaganda of the Judaizers, Paul is here using a baptismal tradition that he and the Galatians are sharing and which in this context functions as a "reminder,"¹³² and which purports the conviction that there is no difference between Jews and Gentiles (3:28).

Again we can observe that Paul is using a baptismal tradition which is fitting his line of argumentation, that is, the use of the for-

¹³⁰ Steyn, "Reflections" 484.

¹³¹ Barth, *Taufe* 46.

¹³² Betz, "Literary Composition" 371/87; *idem*, "Ritual" 107; *idem*, *Galatians* 184f.; similarly Martyn, *Galatians* 374–75.

mula is determined by the *situation* in the Galatian Churches. Consequently, one cannot use this baptismal tradition for the establishment of a development in Paul's thought regarding baptism.

Already in Galatians—like later in Romans—Paul is using exhortation as a means of *argumentation*. This is the most reasonable interpretation of the paraenetic section of Galatians, a section that is preceded by the apologetic text-part 1:6–2:21 and succeeded by the polemic conclusion in 6:11–17.¹³³ The argumentative proof of the so called paraenetic text-part 5:1(or 13)-6:10 underscores “the moral character of the author and his message by means of the admonition given in the text itself. Consequently the propaganda of the adversaries misses the target; and this is indeed the real purpose of the paraenetical section (. . .) in Paul's strategy of argumentation” in Gal 5–6.¹³⁴

Paul's Argument in Romans

The threatening Judaizing opposition against him in the Roman Church(es) makes Paul fiercely argue his case in chapter 6. As we have seen he does so already in 3:8ff., but only in chapter 6 does he develop his argumentation fully.

The reason for accusing Paul of libertinism lies in his thesis formulated, i.a. in 5:20–21. This thesis constitutes the immediate thematic presupposition for Paul's argumentation in chapter 6, and it does so in a two-fold way: (1) *Negatively* it is stated in the formulation: “The law came in to increase the trespass;” (2) *Positively* it is stated in the formulation: “But where (οὗ δὲ . . .) sin increased, grace abounded all the more.” Following directly upon this thesis Paul quotes a contra-argument brought forth by his antagonistic opponents in 6:1 as we saw earlier. Paul rejects the interpretation of his position by the opposition by means of μὴ γένοιτο (absolutely not!). The adversaries conclusion would be a pure anachronism (v. 2).

This should really be enough! However, Paul is not content with his first argument and continues by engaging another proof for his position, this time by means of the baptismal tradition. He thereby employs the tradition known and accepted by all partners: ἢ ἄγνοεῖτε (“or do you not know?”).¹³⁵ Connecting to this baptismal tradition,

¹³³ See Becker, *Galater* 11 and *ad loc.*

¹³⁴ Hellholm, “Argumentation” 176; on Romans 6:15–23, see, 170–79.

¹³⁵ See Hellholm, “Argumentation” 124–25; *idem*, “Römer 7.1–6” 387–88.

which all believers confessed after baptism as we saw earlier, Paul continues his argumentation in a negative as well as in a positive way:¹³⁶

(1) The *negative* aspect is clearer and simpler to grasp. The Christian believer has died and been buried with Christ in baptism—death is here metaphorically meant!

(2) The *positive* aspect causes Paul difficulties when using the baptismal credence. The verb-form in the future tense (συζήσομεν/ἐσόμεθα vv. 5 and 8, which Paul has taken over from the baptismal formula) does only make statements about the coming resurrection but nothing of relevance for the present. Therefore Paul changes the formulation in the future tense into a presentic ethical statement in v. 4c: οὕτως καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐν καινότητι ζωῆς περιπατήσωμεν. This turn of the argument was necessary, if Paul wanted to say something positive that was relevant to the issues at stake. The argument from baptism is thus made significant for the Christians new life in Christ here and now and not only in the eschaton. The ethical implications of baptism is furthermore fully in compliance with the corresponding ethical demands in the mystery cults, esp. in the Isis-initiations as has been emphasized by H. Braun, when he first notes, “Die Weihe nimmt den Mysten in eine ausgesprochene Verpflichtung hinein” and then continues by stating, “[a]uch die Verpflichtung, also das Verständnis solch einer engen Verbindung mit der Gottheit als Dienst, hat bis in die militanten Ausdrücke hinein bei Paulus (besonders Röm 6,12–23; auch schon 6,4c) ihre Analogien. . . .”¹³⁷

Once again, we can observe how Paul uses a well-known tradition, a “baptismal credo,” in order to refute Judaistic accusations against himself and his notion of justification by faith alone. Paul’s deliberation on baptism and his use of tradition are also here determined by his needs when arguing his case in a specific situational context. Thus I hope to have argued the likelihood that Paul did not develop his understanding of baptism as a “union with Christ” only at the time of Romans as Professor Betz claims, but that also

¹³⁶ Regarding the relationship between the two stanzas (1) and (2) in the reconstructed pre-Pauline baptismal tradition, see Hellholm, “Argumentation” 158–59.

¹³⁷ H. Braun, “Das ‘Stirb und werde’ in der Antike und im Neuen Testament,” *Gesammelte Studien zum Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt* (2nd ed.; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1967) 148 and 153 respectively. Further, see Hellholm, “Argumentation” 159, 170–79.

here he relies on preformulated traditions which he can use when rebuking accusations against himself for proclaiming a libertine conduct of life in communities founded by himself or by others.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion the following results of our *diachronic*, *pragmatic* as well as *synchronic* investigation can be summarized in brief: (1) Traditional material from the very early times of the Christian Church can be reconstructed from the Pauline epistles. (2) This is true in regard to christological creeds as well as to baptismal formulas. (3) Paul uses these traditional formulas as basis for his argumentation, especially since his technique in using them is that of a "reminder." (4) The three baptismal formulas are different in structure and terminology, and have each a different specific *Sitz im Leben*. (5) All three formulas analyzed above are used by Paul in connection with different kinds of conflicts. On each occasion Paul chooses the most appropriate formula in arguing his case. (6) It is, therefore, significant to observe that in every instance when a baptismal formula has been used and adapted by Paul, it is found in an apologetic text-segment. (7) These formulas, as used by Paul in the extant letters, do contribute to a better understanding of the problems in the congregations addressed. (8) Paul's argumentative strategy comes to its climax precisely in those cases when he relies on pre-formulated material. (9) These texts—as pre-Pauline formulas—do not allow for a reconstruction of a development in Paul's theological thinking or argumentation, since they are used by him in situational contexts of various molds. (10) The analysis performed so far can help in establishing a cautious reconstruction of the baptismal liturgy in the earliest strata of the Early Church: (a) at the baptismal performance, the "name-formula" was used by the baptizer, (b) after the performance, the "baptismal pronouncement" was directed by the baptizer or an assistant to the newly baptized neophytes, (c) likewise after the performance of the baptismal rite the newly baptized converts themselves proclaimed their "baptismal credo" to the assembled congregation.

The Fourth Gospel

REREADING GENESIS IN THE PROLOGUE OF JOHN?

John Painter

Peder Borgen was one of the first people I came to know through the *Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas*. At these meetings, in various cities around the world, I came to know and value, in particular, his work on *John* and *Philo*. It seemed fitting, in this essay in his honor, to revisit an area of Peder's early work on the Prologue. In this work he drew on Jewish exegetical methods to illuminate the Prologue. Naturally, Philo's contribution was not overlooked in these studies. Writing in the early 1970's, it was inevitable that he would begin with issues raised by Rudolf Bultmann's contribution to the study of the Prologue.

1. *Bultmann and the Wisdom Tradition*

In his 1923 essay on the background of the Prologue, Bultmann drew attention to the question of the relation of the Prologue to the Gospel as a whole and the integrity of the Prologue as a uniform composition.¹ On these questions Bultmann declared himself to be in agreement with Julius Wellhausen. Bultmann agreed that the Prologue was based on an independent source and that verses 6–8 and 15 were redactional additions. Indeed, he considered that the evangelist was responsible for other parts of the Prologue also. His judgement was based on stylistic, linguistic-grammatical and ideological criteria.

In 1970 and 1972 Peder Borgen wrote two studies on the Prologue.² One of his aims was to show that the attempt to analyze the Prologue

¹ See "Der religionsgeschichtliche Hintergrund des Prolog zum Johannes-Evangelium" in *Eucharisterion: Festschrift für H. Gunkel*, 2 Teil (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1923) 3–26. There is, of course, also Bultmann's subsequent commentary on John, *Das Evangelium des Johannes* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1941). Prior to publication in 1941, fascicles of the commentary had been published as Bultmann completed sections of the commentary.

² See his "Observations on the Targumic Character of the Prologue of John," *NTS* 16 (1970) 288–95 and "Logos was the true Light," *NovT* 14 (1972) 115–30.

on the basis of the distinction between the poetic and prose sections was unconvincing. In fact, this aspect is but a small part of Bultmann's article, though it is important for his approach to the Prologue and the Gospel as a whole. But style was just one of the criteria he used for the identification of the sources of the Gospel. An underlying aim of Borgen's papers was to demonstrate that the identification of passages as stylistically different as the poetry and prose of the Prologue does not undermine its unity. Certainly Borgen makes a strong case for the unity of the Prologue. But it is less clear that this precludes the evangelist's use of sources in composing it. Whether or not the evangelist used literary sources, the ideas and motifs have a history of religions background. The purpose of Bultmann's article was to illuminate this. Here it may be that Bultmann and Borgen are not as far apart as at first seems to be the case.

Bultmann found the history of religions background of the Prologue in Hellenistic Judaism where the figure of lady Wisdom was identified with the *Logos*. What made this identification necessary was John's use of *Logos* in the Prologue, though Bultmann found the history of religions background for this use in the myth that finds expression in Israel's tradition of Lady Wisdom. The literary parallels concern Wisdom and are drawn from Israel's Wisdom Literature. Consequently, although Bultmann refers to Genesis 1, it is not here that he finds a precedent for the hypostatization of the heavenly *Logos*. Therefore, it is unlikely that Genesis itself suggested the motif of creation by the heavenly *Logos* or the substitution of *Logos* to replace the hypostatization of Lady Wisdom.

2. *The Targumic Character of the Prologue*

On the other hand, Borgen argues that the Prologue is the result of a Targumic interpretation of Genesis 1:1-5. He describes this kind of interpretation in terms of paraphrasing expansions in which words and phrases replace and interpret words and phrases in Genesis 1:1-5. In particular he notes that the use of *Logos* in John 1:1, 18 is probably an interpretation and replacement of the phrase "and God said" (Gen 1:3). Borgen also thinks that the explicit identification of the *Logos* with the light implies that Gen 1:3 provides the exegetical basis because "and God said" is connected with light and, for the Prologue of John, the *Logos* was the true light. Borgen provides

ample evidence from Jewish sources in support of his reading. The result is his analysis of the Prologue as a composition in *two parts*, each of which has three sections. Each of the three sections of part one picks up words from Genesis. Some of these words, and no others from Genesis 1, are picked up in part two, though the order of treatment in the sections of part one is reversed in the elaboration of part two.³

Section a) is found in 1:1–2 and 1:14–18 where the words λόγος and Θεός are repeated;

Section b) is found in 1:3 and 1:10–13 that treat the creation (ἐγένετο) of all things/the world;

Section c) is found in 1:4–5 and 1:6–9 where the common word from Genesis is “light”.

An alternative description might seem to be a chiasmic structure.⁴ In this case the two sections marked c) would be combined as the mid point of the chiasm. But this does not suit Borgen’s analysis because the two parts represent two different epochs, the primordial time of creation and the historic moment of the coming of the historic revealer in the *Logos* made flesh. At this point Borgen makes a significant contrast between the two parts. He also contrasts the first part with Genesis. For the Prologue, light, not darkness, is the original state of the creation. Thus, in 1:5, reference to the light shining in the darkness implies nightfall and this, Borgen thinks, is confirmed by the use of κατέλαβεν. He appeals to the use of this verb in 12:35 and other sources outside the NT to show that nightfall is a symbol for the Fall in the sin of Adam and the first generations. He

³ Borgen (in an Attached Note in *Philo, John and Paul*, Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987, 95), responding to Alan Culpepper’s critique of his essays, observes that “no material from Gen 1:1–5 is used in John 1:6–18 apart from repetition of the terms and the interpretative phrases already utilized in John 1:1–5. . . . John 1:1–5 is the basic exposition of Gen 1:1–5, while John 1:6–18 draws upon terms, phrases and ideas from John 1:1–5, and relates them to the appearance of Jesus Christ (‘the incarnational event’).”

⁴ See R. Alan Culpepper, “The Pivot of St John’s Prologue,” *NTS* 27 (1980) 1–31. Having made these comments I subsequently turned to Borgen’s synthesis of his two earlier articles in collection of essays, *Philo, John and Paul: New Perspectives on Judaism and Early Christianity*, Brown Judaic Studies 131 (Atlanta: Scholars, 1987) 75–101. At the end of this paper Borgen responds to Alan Culpepper’s criticism of his proposal. Most seriously Borgen notes that Culpepper’s provides no support for his chiasmic structure from the ancient sources and ignores the place of Genesis so clearly indicated by the opening words of the Prologue.

argues that "In John 1:5b it is stated that nightfall seeks to overcome the light of day, and darkness here seems to be identified with man's sin. Jewish texts support the hypothesis that John is here referring to Adam's Fall, and eventually the first generation's Fall as well. . . ."⁵ Borgen concludes that reference to the coming of the light in Jesus (1:9; 12:46) implies the primordial light had been removed along with the original life in the coming of "nightfall." Jewish interpretative traditions teach that light and life were lost in the Fall and John teaches that they were brought back by the coming of Jesus. But, against this interpretation, according to 1:5b, the light was not overcome by the darkness. It nowhere suggests that the light was withdrawn.

Borgen has convincingly argued that the Prologue is to be understood as an exposition of Gen 1:1ff. and that the *Logos* and light in the Prologue are connected on the basis of Gen 1:3. Less clear is his view that (in John 1:5ff.) the primordial light was followed by darkness and the reappearance of the light in a new age (in Jesus). Certainly, the *Logos* incarnate in Jesus was the true light coming into the world. But John 1:5b surely does not support the view of the withdrawal of the light. Here the use of οὐ κατέλαβεν has the meaning of the failure to suppress.⁶ It asserts that the darkness did not

⁵ See "Logos was the True Light," 128. See also 130, "*katalambanein* in John 1:5b means 'seize', 'overcome', in an undesirable or hostile manner. The conception of nightfall in this verse can be understood against the background of Jewish conceptions of the removal of light, and the coming of the darkness of night with Adam's and the first generation's sin. John seems to say implicitly that light and life were removed at the Fall, in order to be brought back into the world by the coming of Jesus."

⁶ Earlier I had leaned to multiple levels of meaning for οὐ κατέλαβεν in 1:5. See my *The Quest for the Messiah* (Edinburg: T. & T. Clark, 1991; 2nd ed.; Nashville: Abingdon, 1993) 154. I now think that a mistake. I think that, in 1:5, the compound κατέλαβεν is more aggressive in meaning than παρέλαβον that is used to convey the transmission/reception of tradition. In John the darkness and the light are antithetical. Each excludes the other. In Johannine terms the darkness cannot receive the light. It can only pass away in its presence. See 1 John 2:8. The impossible alternative is that the darkness might "snuff out" the light. This John 1:5 denies. In support of this view see Thomas H. Tobin, "The Prologue of John and Hellenistic Jewish Speculation," *CBQ* 52 (1990), 262. Tobin writes, "Yet there are two elements found in John 1:4-5 which move beyond Gen 1:2-5 of which they are interpretations. First, light and darkness in John 1:4-5 are antithetical. The phrase, 'and the darkness did not overcome (κατέλαβεν) it (John 1:5), suggests an underlying conflict and hostility between light and darkness.' Here Tobin adds a footnote on the use of κατέλαβεν in 12:35 and says, "It is also consistent with the contrast between light and darkness in Johannine thought in general. . . . This is also the interpretation of Origen (*Comm. in Jo* 11.27 . . .) and most of the Greek Fathers. . . ."

suppress (overcome) the light, implying the ongoing presence of the light in the world. This is supported by a variety of references: to Abraham who (proleptically?) rejoiced to see the day of the Messiah (8:56); to Moses who wrote of and bore witness to Jesus (5:39, 45–47); and Isaiah, who saw his (the *Logos*’) glory (2:41). The appeal to scripture throughout the Gospel confirms the activity of the light of the *Logos* in the world prior to the coming of the *Logos* made flesh in Jesus. But if the light of the *Logos* continued to be present according to 1:5b, how do we account for reference to the coming of the light into the world in 1:9? The answer seems to be that the light was coming into the world in a new way. If the *Logos* was the true light, the incarnation of the *Logos* involved the presence of the light continuously in the life of Jesus. Just how this is to be understood is a task for the exegesis of the Gospel as a whole.

3. *Genesis and the Wisdom Tradition*

If Borgen rightly notes the importance of Genesis 1 for the interpretation of the Prologue, he gives insufficient attention to the literary parallels in Wisdom tradition.⁷ This is given concentrated attention by Bultmann but without adequate attention to role of Genesis 1. It is true that Bultmann says:

I think it probable that he [the evangelist] intends his Prologue to correspond to the beginning of the sacred book of the Jews, but that Gen 1 should have prompted him to substitute *Logos* for *Sophia*, wisdom, is

⁷ Bultmann’s article provides ample evidence as does the more recent study by Thomas H. Tobin, “The Prologue of John and Hellenistic Jewish Speculation,” *CBQ* 52 (1990) 252–269. Naturally, this is an area that has been widely treated by J. R. Harris, *The Origin of the Prologue of St John* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1917) and C. H. Dodd, *Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1953). Tobin notes that, although Wisdom sometimes appears in parallel with *Logos* in the Wisdom literature, this provides no precedent for the displacement of Wisdom by *Logos* that we find in the Prologue. Bultmann also notes that Genesis 1 does not suggest this substitution either. He suggests that the parallel use of Wisdom and *Logos* in Philo provides a basis for understanding the Prologue. Bultmann does not suggest that John or his source drew on Philo. Rather he appeals to the more general influence of Hellenistic Judaism of which Philo is a prime example. Tobin (“Prologue,” 262, 266) also supports this position. Both Tobin and Bultmann note that the Middle Platonic understanding of *Logos* found in Hellenistic Judaism (especially in Alexandria) provided features of the Johannine *Logos* not to be found in the Wisdom tradition.

highly unlikely—the more so because there is at best an indirect allusion to the “Word” in Gen 1.⁸

Bultmann had already observed:

Rabbinical exegesis actually finds wisdom in Gen 1:1, by combining “in the beginning” (*b’resit*) with Prov 8:22, where wisdom is called *resit darko*, “the beginning of his way.” Similarly the Jerusalem targum renders Gen 1:1 “in wisdom he created.”⁹

He rightly notes that this is informed by the view of Wisdom as an independent divine being, God’s companion, such as is found in Prov 8:30; Wis 8:3; 9:4, 9. Such an understanding does not, itself, have any bearing on the question of the formative influence of Genesis 1 on the use of *Logos* in the Prologue.

The opening words of the Prologue are enough to alert the reader to the underlying importance of Gen 1. But, as Bultmann observes, overwhelmingly the literary parallels of the Prologue are to the Wisdom literature. The most important evidence used to demonstrate a basis for the substitution of *Logos* for Wisdom is to be found in the writings of Philo. Bultmann treats Philo as a representative of Hellenistic Judaism in which the role of Wisdom is interpreted in terms of the *Logos*, second god and mediator between God and creation. For Bultmann, there is no suggestion that the Prologue is directly dependent on Philo. Rather, Philo is representative of Hellenistic Judaism¹⁰ in which Wisdom and *Logos* are understood in the parallelism of the Wisdom literature such as Sirach and Wisdom.¹¹

Bultmann uses this overlapping of Wisdom and *Logos* in the Wisdom literature and in Philo to shift the focus from Genesis, rather than to show how Gen 1:1–5 might have been read in terms of creation by the *Logos*. Psalm 33:6 apparently understands the recurrent “and God said” as an indication of the role of “the word of the Lord” and applies that role to the initial act of the creation of the heavens and the earth. But there is no suggestion in the Psalm of the *Logos* as a divine hypostasis such as we find in the Prologue and the writings of Philo. Such a first century reader of Genesis as Philo presupposed an identification of the role of Wisdom with *Logos* in

⁸ “Der religionsgeschichtliche Hintergrund des Prolog,” part IV.

⁹ “Der religionsgeschichtliche Hintergrund des Prolog,” part III.

¹⁰ See “Der religionsgeschichtliche Hintergrund des Prolog,” part IV.

¹¹ See “Der religionsgeschichtliche Hintergrund des Prolog,” part III.

the work of creation, and Philo provides strong evidence for the preference of *Logos* in this context. This use of *Logos* introduced motifs associated with the *Logos* of Middle Platonism, some of which overlapped Wisdom motifs. In this way the Wisdom tradition was creatively developed as well as enriching the already rich tradition of the *Logos* motif.

Part of that enrichment is a consequence of the identification of Wisdom with *Torah*. in such texts as Sirach 24 and Baruch 4:1. With this, the identification of Wisdom with *Logos* is implied. For Judaism, the word of God is enshrined in *Torah*. Thus in the great *Torah* liturgy of Psalm 119 (verse 105) the Psalmist writes, "Your word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." Once this is done, all the attributes of the Wisdom tradition are attributed to *Torah* and can also be spoken of in terms of the *Logos*. Further, once *Logos* is understood in terms of *Torah*, elements of the Greek philosophical tradition are also attributed to *Torah*. Some of these overlap and expand attributes of the Wisdom tradition. For our understanding of this, Philo is invaluable. But as both Bultmann and Borgen note, Philo writes in a way that suggests that he expects his readers to be familiar with his use of the *Logos* tradition. Thus none of this evidence implies John's dependence on Philo, who reflects a much stronger philosophical outlook than John. What it means is that the Wisdom/*Torah*/*Logos* tradition found in Philo provides the presuppositions for the hermeneutic John uses in his interpretation of Genesis in the Prologue.

4. *Genesis and the Prologue*

What are we to make of the influence of Genesis 1 on the shape of the Prologue? Borgen has made a case for understanding the Prologue as a targumic elaboration of Gen 1:1–5 where 1:3 functions as a basic text. I find the overall argument persuasive, though I would stress that it presupposes the hermeneutic that combines Wisdom/*Torah*/*Logos* in the Johannine *Logos* and identifies "and God said" in Gen 1:3 with the divine *Logos*. According to Borgen, there are two parts to the Prologue, A. 1:1–5 and B. 1:6–18. While Borgen has made a case *formally* for treating B. as the elaboration of A., he also recognizes that there is a temporal sequence between A. and B. Thus, *materially*, B. follows A. rather than being an exposition of

A. It is, I think, questionable that 1:1–5 refers only to primordial time. Given Borgen's analysis, it makes better sense to me if 1:1–5 relates to the time prior to the incarnation of the *Logos*. That being the case, the introduction of the historical witness to the true light in 1:6–8 signals the temporal change from the light of the imminent *Logos* to the coming of the light in the *Logos* made flesh. But Borgen is persuaded to restrict 1:1–5 to primordial time because he finds support in the Jewish sources for withdrawal of the light because of the sin of Adam and the succeeding generation. Borgen describes different approaches in Judaism to the understanding of the relationship of sin and the darkness. Against this background, his understanding of the Prologue is in terms of "light as their original possession, with the ensuing Fall and darkness." "John 1:4–9 should be understood against the background of Jewish traditions of primordial light which was followed by darkness in primordial time, thus to reappear later in history, or in the coming aeon."¹² Contrary to this view, both Gen 1:3 and the Prologue provide a basis for understanding the introduction of the light into the darkness ("the light shines in the darkness," 1:5a) in the word of God, the *Logos*. John speaks of the continuing struggle between the light and the darkness, but this provides no solution to the question of the origin of the darkness any more than does Gen 1:2. The difference is that Genesis 1:1–5 implies no struggle between the light and the darkness. Rather there is a harmony in the sequence of day and night.

There is evidence that Genesis 1 attracted a good deal of attention in the period in which John wrote. Genesis 1 was subject to imaginative readings in such works as the Hermetic tractate *Poimandres*. Recently there has been a concentration of studies dealing with texts developing a significant exegesis of the opening chapters of Genesis such as *Poimandres*, *Gospel of Thomas*, *The Writing without Title (On the Origin of the World)*, *Eugnostos*, the *Apocryphon of John*, *Trimorphic Protennoia*, *Odes of Solomon* and the Prologue of the Gospel of John.¹³ In addition,

¹² See "Logos", *NTS* 16 (1970) 129.

¹³ Important studies on these texts have been made by C. H. Dodd, *The Bible and the Greeks* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1935); Stevan Davies, "The Christology and Protology of the Gospel of John," *JBL* 111 (1992) 663–83; Elaine H. Pagels, "Exegesis of Genesis 1 in the Gospels of Thomas and John," *JBL* 118 (1999) 47–96; Arthur J. Droge, "Sabbath Work", a paper delivered at the 2001 SBL Meeting, November 2001. See also the papers by Peder Borgen already noted. The study by Thomas Tobin, "The Prologue of John and Hellenistic Jewish Speculation," *CBQ*

discussions in Jewish sources such as Philo and the Rabbinic writings as well as Early Christian Fathers such as Irenaeus enrich the context in which the interpretation of Genesis in John is understood.

5. *Exegesis of Genesis 1*

One important study by Elaine H. Pagels is entitled, "Exegesis of Genesis 1 in the Gospels of Thomas and John." The point of this essay is to argue that *Thomas* provides a perspective representative of Jewish, "pagan" and other Christian texts that are in contrast to the Gospel of John. A cluster of sayings is identified in *Thomas* (logia 4, 11, 18, 19, 37, 49, 50, 77, 83, 84, 85 and also in log. 1, 2, 3, 22, 24, 61, 70) that relate the creation of the figure of light on day one of the Genesis creation story in 1:3 to the image of God of 1:26–27. Pagels notes that *Thomas* identifies the figure of light with Jesus as well as the image within all people.¹⁴ The primordial light was present in creation, and potentially the image is to be discovered in all people and is also identified with Jesus. Thomas teaches that the light is in all things as well as *manifest* in a succession of those who have come to know the light, of which Jesus is a significant representative. The light is recovered in the image of Gen 1:26–27a.¹⁵

52 (1990) 252–269, establishes a pattern in texts from Hellenistic Judaism, especially associated with Alexandria, which have important points of contact with *Thomas* and provide a precedent for the use of *Logos* in the Prologue of John. Stevan Davies, "The Christology and Protology of the Gospel of Thomas," *JBL* 111 (1992) 665, writes, "*Thomas* seems to derive from the same milieu as does Philo—Hellenistic Judaism, which produced its vocabulary largely through allegorical exegesis, especially of Genesis 1 and 2."

¹⁴ Thomas Tobin, "Prologue" 267, says, "This assimilation in Hellenistic Judaism of the *logos* to the figure of the heavenly man may have served as an important step in the kind of reflection that led to the identification of the *logos* with a particular human being, Jesus of Nazareth, in the hymn in the Prologue of John. Philo and Hellenistic Jewish exegetes of like mind would certainly have found such an identification impossible. Nevertheless, a tradition of interpretation in which the *logos* was identified with the figure of the heavenly man does make the identification of the *logos* with a particular man more understandable within such a tradition of interpretation. The identification of the *logos* with the heavenly man of Gen 1:27 provides the middle term, if you will, between the *logos* and Jesus of Nazareth: *logos*—heavenly man—particular man (Jesus of Nazareth)."

¹⁵ Thomas Tobin, "Prologue" 267, comes to a similar conclusion concerning Philo's reading of Genesis. "An important development has taken place in the Hellenistic Jewish interpretation of the *logos* in connection with interpretations of texts from Genesis 1–3. The reasons for this assimilation of the figure of the *logos*

The image is understood to be undivided, the single one, so that the division into male and female is seen in terms of a fall away from the original, primordial creation. For *Thomas* the transformation back to the primordial creation takes place through the initiation of baptism. The transformation appears to be one of perception. The world does not change but the way of perceiving it does.

Pagels argues that whatever else John might be opposing, the Prologue is opposed to this view found in *Thomas* and a host of works Jewish, Christian, and pagan. In defence of *Thomas*, Pagels affirms that the views found there derive "from mainstream Jewish Genesis speculation, evinced in sources ranging from Philo and *Poimandres* to the *Odes of Solomon* and *The Writing without Title*."¹⁶ Here the argument counteracts the evaluation of *Thomas* as a Gnostic text. Rather it is defended as coming out of mainstream Judaism. It should be remembered that Bultmann argued that the Gnostic views came to the evangelist via Judaism, whether we classify the views as mainstream Jewish or not.

At the same time Pagels observes that the views are found in texts Jewish, Christian and pagan, including probably Gentile Hermetic practice and exegesis in *Poimandres*.¹⁷ While it is argued that the exegetical pattern of *Thomas* was widespread, it is also said "perhaps especially among Jewish circles in Egypt."¹⁸ The question is, what is "mainstream Jewish Genesis speculation"? Pagels uses the concept to provide an alternative to a Gnostic proposal. An alternative is to find a home for Gnosticism in "mainstream Jewish Genesis speculation." It is notable that the description is of Genesis *speculation*. What is it that drives this speculation? The speculation includes distinguishing the first spiritual Adam of the first day from the second

and the heavenly man are undoubtedly complex and reflect developments in the history of Hellenistic Jewish biblical interpretation. Two reasons, however, were certainly involved. First, the heavenly man [Gen 1:27], as the paradigm for the fashioning of the earthly man [2:7], was for Philo and his tradition one of the many paradigms found in the *logos* (e.g., *Opif.* 20). Second, and perhaps more importantly, both the *logos* and the heavenly man came to function in very similar if not identical ways. Both served as paradigms for earthly creation (one for the whole and the other for human beings); both came to serve an anagogic function in that they were guiding divine powers by which the human mind was enabled to ascend towards God."

¹⁶ See "Exegesis of Genesis 1" 489. Cf. 491.

¹⁷ See "Exegesis of Genesis 1" 492. Cf. 479.

¹⁸ See "Exegesis of Genesis 1" 492. Cf. 480.

psychic Adam of the sixth day and the third earthly Adam of the eighth day.¹⁹ The pattern may be derived from Genesis but does not seem to be suggested by the text of Genesis. What is the source of the hermeneutic that leads to this Genesis speculation? Pagels does not ask this question. It seems to be enough that it is found in a variety of Jewish sources, even if especially among Jewish circles in Egypt where Hellenistic influence is strongly attested. At the same time, the views are attested outside Jewish sources. For Bultmann, the views that he called Gnostic are found in Jewish sources. But, in terms of the history of ideas, the question can be asked concerning where the views originated and how they entered Judaism and came to influence early Christianity.

The name used to describe the views driving this Genesis speculation is somewhat arbitrary. Certainly the term "Gnosticism" is somewhat anachronistic though its usefulness is justified if the views involved are coherent and not restricted to Jewish or Christian or pagan sources but are found across a wide range of texts. The term "Gnostic" becomes pejorative only because it was excluded by the views that became dominant in Judaism and Christianity from the second century onwards. The analysis of this Genesis speculation is one thing. The negative evaluation is another. One paradox is observed by Pagels. The "exegesis" of Genesis 1 in John 1 is analyzed in terms that show it to be opposed to the Genesis speculation found in *Thomas*. At the same time, she observes "the Gospel of John remains so evocative that followers of Valentinus would read it—even, or especially, its prologue—as a source of their theology."²⁰

6. *Interpreting the Prologue*

Pagels' analysis of the Prologue of John shares important points of agreement with the analysis of Peder Borgen. She sees the Prologue, like *Thomas*, as a drama in two Acts. For *Thomas*, Act 1 is the appearance of the primordial light (Gen 1:3), and Act 2 the creation of humankind in its image (Gen 1:26). Down through the ages the divine light was manifest successfully in the cosmos and creation. For John, Act 1 begins with the creation of all things by the *Logos*

¹⁹ See "Exegesis of Genesis 1" 484.

²⁰ See "Exegesis of Genesis 1" 491.

and continues from the revelation of the primordial light to the time of John the Baptist preparing the way for Act 2. Act 2 involves the incarnation of the *Logos* (1:14) which is the culmination of the final drama, the successful revelation of the divine. Prior to Act 2 the revelation of the light met with failure, rejection and incomprehension (1:5); lack of recognition (1:10); outright rejection (1:11). Thus, between the two Acts Pagels notes the “three negations” of John 1:5, 10, 11 which express the “stunning failure” of the revelation prior to the incarnation.²¹

Like Borgen’s analysis, Pagels sees rejection of the light as the response to the first part. The two differ in that Borgen begins part two at 1:6 while Pagels begins Act 2 at 1:14. The three negations include 1:5, 10, 11 and come between what Pagels calls Act 1 (1:1–5) and Act 2 (1:14–18). Thus 1:5 belongs to Borgen’s first part, but the two negations of 1:10, 11 belong to the second part.²² Is the negation of 1:5 a formal parallel to 1:11–12? If it is, this might be relevant to an understanding of 1:5. In 1:5, 11, 12 the aorist active of the verb λαμβάνειν is used. In 1:11 the compound form is used with negative (οὐ παρέλαβον) to indicate that “his own did not receive him” while in 1:12 ἔλαβον describes the action of those who “received” him. Thus both the simple form of the verb and the compound form παρέλαβον here mean “receive”. But the compound verb used with the negative in 1:5 is κατέλαβεν. It is arguable that this form of the verb, as used in 1:5, has a more aggressive meaning, “to overcome,” or “to suppress.” Used with the negative, 1:5b asserts that the darkness did not overcome or suppress the light.

That more aggressive sense is apparent in 12:35, where the same compound verb is used with reference to *people* being overtaken by the darkness in a context which speaks of the presence of the light. The action of the verb is not directed against the light as it is in 1:5. Nevertheless, the verb (aorist subjunctive following ἵνα) is used in a context which involves the presence of the light and has the aggressive sense of overtaking (and overcoming?) those who do not

²¹ See “Exegesis of Genesis 1” 489–90.

²² Thus, for Borgen, the whole weight of argument for rejection prior to the incarnation rests on οὐ κατέλαβεν in 1:5. By combining 1:5 with the negations of 1:10–11 Pagels adds some weight to the argument for taking οὐ κατέλαβεν as indicating the rejection of the light. But there are significant differences between the use and context of οὐ κατέλαβεν in 1:5 and οὐ παρέλαβον in 1:11.

walk in the light. The reference supports the antithetical nature of light and darkness. The darkness does not overcome the light but does overcome those who do not walk in the light. This suggests that the meaning in 1:5 is that the darkness did not overcome the light.²³ Because the darkness did not for one moment suppress the light, the manifestation of the light can be traced through history down to the incarnation of the *Logos* in whom the light continues to shine. If the darkness did not overcome the light (1:5), nevertheless, not everyone received the *Logos* (1:11). It may be implied that those who did not receive him were overcome by the darkness. But this did not overcome the light and there were those who received the *Logos* (1:12).

Further, in 1:5 the light (neuter accusative αὐτό). is the object of the action οὐ κατέλαβεν (third person singular, aorist indicative active), and the darkness is the active agent. Although 1:9 refers to the coming of the light into the world, reference in 1:10–12 is to the *Logos*, not directly to the light.²⁴ More important, those receiving or not receiving in 1:11, 12 are people (the verbs are third person plural). The distinct compound verb used in 1:5 and the definitive antithetical use of light and darkness in John exclude the sense of “receive.” The meaning must be that the darkness did not overcome the light.

Finally, 1:11–12 does not only assert rejection of the *Logos* by his own. It asserts that as many as received him, who believe in his name, become children of God. If these verses are taken as relevant to the time between Act 1 and Act 2, as Pagels argues, they do not support the view that the revelation prior to Act 2 was a failure. The background of 1:10–12 is the tradition of the rejection of Wisdom/*Torah* by the nations (1 *Enoch* 42:1–3). This is related to the tradition that Israel received Wisdom/*Torah*. An alternative favors the tradition that Wisdom “passes into holy souls and makes them friends of God and prophets” (Wis 7:27–28), or in Johannine terms, “children of God.” This hardly reads like total rejection. But Borgen’s

²³ See the discussion, in support of the continuing presence of the light as a result of the failure of the darkness to suppress it, above in the section outlining Borgen’s position. See also, Tobin, “Prologue of John” 262 and note 29.

²⁴ This is clear from the use of the masculine accusative singular αὐτόν in 1:10, 11, 12. The transition from light to *Logos* is possible because it is the light of the *Logos*, or to use Borgen’s formulation, the *Logos* was the true light.

position is surely correct. The placing of the witness of John Baptist at 1:6–8 firmly signals the transition from primordial history to the time of the evangelist and the story of the incarnate *Logos*. Thus 1:9–13 already speaks of the coming of the light of the incarnate *Logos* into the world and the story of rejection and limited success is the story of the incarnate *Logos*. Although Pagels agrees with C. H. Dodd that “the thought of the incarnation is already in the evangelist’s mind, and the propositions of verses 9–12 refer to Christ as incarnate,”²⁵ she places the negations of 1:10, 11 between the two Acts, prior to the incarnation of the *Logos*. The parallels between John 1:10–12 and Wisdom tradition cannot bear the weight of this exegesis, and 1:5 by itself does not indicate the rejection of the light. Rather it affirms that the darkness could not suppress the light.

7. *John and Thomas*

At this point the critical response of Arthur Droge is relevant.²⁶ His critique takes as its point of departure the question of the suitability of the category “incarnation” to describe the *σὰρξ ἐγένετο* of John 1:14. His view is developed along lines adopted by Raymond Brown, especially in his commentary on the Johannine Epistles.²⁷ Brown argues that the group opposed by the author of 1 John, that he prefers to call “the secessionists” (1 John 2:19), probably did not find any salvific significance in the human life of Jesus. This modifies the implied accusation of 1 John 4:2–3 that the secessionists refused to confess Jesus Christ having come in the flesh. Brown has two grounds for softening the substance of the criticism. Some distortion is to be expected in the words of the arch opponent of the secessionists and their views. Because their views were based on the Gospel of John, they are unlikely to have blatantly rejected the teaching of the Gospel. Thus Brown allows that the Gospel does not clearly establish the importance of Jesus’ human life and death for the Gospel. Droge adopts this view and has his own reasons for his reservations about

²⁵ “Exegesis of Genesis 1” 491 quoting Dodd, *Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* 268.

²⁶ See his SBL paper, “Sabbath Work”, delivered at the November 2001 Meeting in Denver.

²⁷ Raymond E. Brown, *The Epistles of John* (AB 30; Garden City: Doubleday, 1982).

interpretations of the “so called incarnation” in John. He notes that the Gnostic teachers of the second century found the Gospel appealing and, as Pagels notes, they were especially attracted to the Prologue.²⁸ Interestingly, this did not lead Pagels to modify her view of the Johannine understanding of the incarnation and its role in separating John from *Thomas* and later Gnosticism. But Droge attributes to John a view similar to Brown’s secessionists. He also notes that John, like *Thomas*, has no emphasis on the “apparent death and resurrection” of Jesus. In both Gospels individuals “actualize their light” simply on the basis of an encounter with the Revealer. Nevertheless, John features Jesus’ signs²⁹ and this marks an important difference from *Thomas* because they “have a catalytic effect in bringing recognition about.”

Droge indicates that his understanding of *Thomas* and *John* is the reverse of the views expressed by Pagels. Droge understands *John*’s teaching that, just as the *Logos* (Wisdom) had been manifest in the lives of those who had come to knowledge down through the ages, the *Logos* was now manifest in Jesus. John 1:5 is not a negation but an expression of the superiority of the light over the darkness. Further, 1:9 indicates that the “primordial divine light” was not exclusive to the *Logos* but is found in people (“the light of people,” 1:4 and, “the light which enlightens every person,” 1:9) as the image of God. John 1:9–13 does not express failure but limited success prior to the coming of the *Logos* in Jesus.

In contrast to Pagels, Droge thinks that, in *Thomas*, Jesus brings a new understanding of the way things are. He draws on the work of Stevan Davies who outlines his position succinctly:³⁰

In the following essay I argue that Jesus, as *Thomas* portrays him, insists that the world ought to be considered to be in the condition of Gen 1:1–2:4 and, accordingly, that people should restore themselves to the condition of the image of God. They will then live in this world with the rest and immortality proper to the seventh day of creation.

Davies also goes on to say of those who restore themselves:

²⁸ See “Exegesis of Genesis 1” 491.

²⁹ Amongst these Droge includes “the hero’s apparent death and resurrection.”

³⁰ See Stevan Davies, “The Christology and Protology of the Gospel of Thomas,” *JBL* 111 (1992) 663–682 (this quotation is from p. 664, the next from p. 667).

They will know themselves to be sons of the living Father (saying 3)—that is, the image of God, no longer male or female and, having made the male and female into a single one, they will enter the kingdom of heaven (saying 22).

Droge, following Davies, also finds significant differences in the cosmologies of John and *Thomas*. He rightly notes that the darkness in *John* is altogether darker and more deadly than in *Thomas*. John's view of the world is radically dualistic. It is characterized by the tyrannical rule of the "Archon of this Age" (12:31) who manifests the power of darkness. Though all things were created by the *Logos*, the struggle between the light and the darkness continues (note 1:5). For John the struggle with evil is real and evil remains to be overcome in a world in which darkness has not been completely reduced and rectified. The emphasis on the signs of Jesus in John has no counterpart in *Thomas* where the words of Jesus are enough to bring a transformation of consciousness to an awareness of having actualized the primordial androgynous state of the sabbath rest. What is at stake for *Thomas* is the perception or understanding of the world. As Davies writes:

John's Gospel contrasts this world with another world from which Jesus comes (cf., e.g., 8:23; 17:13–19). *Thomas* is not dualistic in this sense. For *Thomas* there is no contrast between this world and another world; rather *Thomas* contrasts this world as apprehended properly with this world not apprehended properly. *Thomas* is replete with sayings contrasting the condition of people who do and do not apprehend the world through the primordial light of the beginning.³¹

Droge argues that, for John, the reality is that the "darkness has not been completely reduced and rectified." Hence the "sabbath condition," to use the terms of *Thomas*, has not been achieved because creation remains incomplete. I believe that Droge correctly evaluates the situation according to John. For support he appeals to the incident in John 5 and the text of 5:17.³² He also bases his argument on the LXX reading of Gen 2:2, which does not substantially differ from the Hebrew text. The point made is that the text indi-

³¹ Davies, "Christology and Protology" 671.

³² See also 4:34; 5:36; 9:4; 17:4; 19:28, 30. See also my "Earth Made Whole: John's Rereading of Genesis," to appear in *Word, Theology and Community in John*, to be published by Chalice Press in 2002. That essay builds on my "Text and Context in John 5," *ABR* 35 (1987) 28–34.

cates that God completed his work *on the seventh day* and rested from his completed work. The argument is that God worked on the seventh day until creation was finished and then blessed the sabbath. Thus Jesus' work on the seventh day (sabbath?) was not a violation of the sabbath because creation was not complete and the sabbath rest had not yet begun. This argument does not seem to be convincing for a number of reasons. Even if in the primordial seven days the creative work continued on to the seventh day, at some point on that seventh day the creation was declared complete and the sabbath was instituted. Even on Droge's reading of Genesis 2:2, that point has passed. The logic of his argument is only that the sabbath begins at some point after the beginning of the seventh day. It seems rather that the assertion that God's creative work is incomplete stands in tension with Genesis and the proclamation of the completion of creation.

8. *Contrasting Genesis and John*

If, according to Genesis, the first state of the creation was darkness, the great creative act of the first day is the word, "Let there be light!" But the darkness was not altogether dispelled. Rather it was brought under God's control and ordered into day and night. Indeed, on the fourth day God creates two lights, the greater to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night. Thus, even though God has called the darkness night, he has created a lesser light to rule it. All of this suggests a harmony of light and darkness, day and night in the Genesis creation story. This harmony is reflected in one of the great creation Psalms (104:19–24).

You have made the moon to mark the seasons;
 the sun knows its time for setting.
 You make darkness, and it is night,
 when all the beasts of the forest creep forth,
 The young lions roar for their prey,
 seeking their food from God.
 When the sun rises, they get them away
 and lie down in their dens.
 Man goes forth to his work
 and to his labour until the evening.
 O Lord, how manifold are your works!
 In wisdom you have made them all;
 the earth is full of your creatures.

The situation is quite different in John. John 1:4–5 reflects the great creative word of Genesis 1:3 which brings light where once there was only darkness. Although John mentions the light before the darkness, it is not self evident that light was the original state of the creation. In 1:5 the present tense is used to describe, “the light *shines* in the darkness.” This implies the that the darkness is the context in which the eternal light shines. If Gen 1:3 is the basis of John 1:5, the word that splits the darkness sets the light into mortal combat with the darkness. Indeed, it is clear that the darkness seeks to overcome and extinguish the light. This it could not do. But the text of John also makes clear that the light has not dispelled the darkness. The Johannine story is one of the mortal struggle of the light with the darkness. In the story of Jesus, John provides a paradigm for understanding the assurance of the victory of the light in the midst of the struggle with the darkness.

9. *The Prologue, its Context and Underlying Tradition*

One puzzling question concerns the context addressed by the Prologue. The language of the Prologue implies a context within Hellenistic Judaism influenced by Wisdom speculation, Genesis interpretation, and *Logos* theology. While texts from Alexandria, especially the writings of Philo, provide important evidence of the context, it is likely that this evidence is representative of Judaism more widely than that city. The antithetical language that first appears in the Prologue (1:5) and dominates the Gospel as a whole, finds its closest parallels in some of the texts from Qumran (e.g., 1QS 3.13–4.26 and 1QM).³³ This provides a caution against dismissing Judean connections of the Gospel. At the same time it needs to be remembered that the texts from Qumran are also evidence of Hellenistic Judaism. The dualism of John and Qumran has no comparable parallel in Jewish sources prior to the Hellenistic period. But there is no comparable *Logos* theology in the Qumran texts to what is found in the Prologue. What is to be made of this?

It is possible that we should think of the preliminary shaping of the Johannine tradition in Judea prior to the Jewish war (66–73 CE)

³³ See my *Quest* (1993) 35–52.

and the final shaping in some major city in the diaspora where Greek was the primary language. The Gospel was written in Greek, although it reflects intra Jewish issues, debates and conflicts. Nothing in the Gospel implies a strong Gentile presence in the Johannine community or orientation of the Gospel.

The Prologue assumes a context in which *Logos* has subsumed Wisdom tradition and its identification with *Torah*.³⁴ This is implied by the literary parallels from Wisdom tradition used in the Prologue to describe the role of the *Logos*, including texts that identified Wisdom with *Torah*. At the same time, the *Logos* that becomes incarnate in Jesus is set over against the law (*Torah*). This antithesis is also implied by 1:14. In the Jewish tradition the law (spoken of in the role of Wisdom) pitched her tent (σκηνή) and dwelt in the midst of Israel, in the Tabernacle/Temple (Sir 24:8, 10; Wis 9:10; Bar 3:37; Prov 8:31). But John says, “the *Logos* became flesh and dwelt (ἐσκήνωσεν) among us,” 1:14. What John says about the *hesed* and *emeth* of God revealed in the glory of the *Logos* echoes what was said of the revelation at the giving of the law in Exodus (33:18–20). That the revelation in the *Logos* made flesh replaces the other is implied by Jesus’ teaching about the new Temple in 2:13–22 and 4:19–24. A more radical position might be stated in the antithetical statement of 1:17, “The law was given by Moses, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.” This could be taken as a rejection of the Exodus tradition or an interpretation of it as a witness to *hesed* and *emeth* without actualizing effect. This came in Jesus Christ. The latter seems to be the Johannine position which accepts the witness of *Torah* (5:39, 45–47) and affirms a new development in the *Logos* made flesh.

Nevertheless, 1:17 implies a certain negativity in relation to the law, a negativity that is reflected in those dialogues in which Jesus speaks to the Jews of “your law,” apparently distancing himself from it (see e.g., 8:17; 10:34 and cf. 7:19; 15:24). As noted, the Jesus of John also appeals to Moses as a witness to him, as one who wrote of him (5:39, 45–47). Even here Jesus recognizes that the appeal to Moses is controversial because “the Jews” (5:16, 18) think the law is on their side against Jesus. This is even clearer in the dialogues of John 9. The once blind man appeals to the evidence of Jesus’ sign, which gave him sight, as evidence that Jesus is from God. But

³⁴ See my *Quest* (1993) 145–149.

the Pharisees/Jews appeal to the breaking of the sabbath law (Moses) to demonstrate that Jesus is a sinner, not from God (9:16, 24, 28–29).

The distance separating Jesus from the “Jews” is reflected in the way the Gospel speaks of “the Jews,” often seeming to imply that Jesus and his disciples are not Jews. The use of the term “Jews” is the language of the narrator (e.g., 1:19; 2:6, 13, 20; 3:1; 4:9c etc.). It is also the language of the Samaritan woman (4:9a, cf., 4:20) and of Pilate (19:19–22). In response to the Samaritan woman’s identification of him as a Jew, Jesus responds using her idiom, “salvation is of the Jews,” (4:22). But the internal language of Galilean and Judean “Jews” uses the term “Israelite,” as Jesus does to Nathanael (1:47), and Nathanael refers to Jesus as king of Israel (1:49). Contrast Pilate’s title for Jesus as “king of the Jews” (19:19–22). In the same vein, when speaking to Nicodemus, who is referred to by the narrator as “a ruler of the Jews” (3:1), Jesus calls him “the teacher of Israel” (3:10).

A partial solution to this language problem is to recognize the term “Jew, Jews” as the language of the Roman empire derived from the province of Judea.³⁵ But the name was not restricted to those dwelling in the province. Rome recognized the allegiance to the temple in Jerusalem of Jewish dwellers throughout the empire so that the religion of the Jews was recognized as a legal *ethnic* religion. The term *religion* was not applied to cults of personal salvation, which were described as *superstition* and banned. Jews living in diaspora tended to use the language of the empire as did the people of the empire, including Samaritans. Only in the land of Israel was the language of Israel and Israelite the common description. This of course means that the narrator of John, in speaking of “Jews,” adopts the language of the empire. This could mean that the narrator reflects the usage of a diaspora Jewish author (or Gentile?) or an author who has adapted his language to a diaspora context for diaspora readers.

The language of the narrator not only implies a diaspora perspective. It reflects a distancing of the believers from Jews who do not believe in Jesus. Even in the Prologue, the language of rejection is used, not only of the world (1:10), but also of “his (Jesus) own

³⁵ See my “The Church and Israel in the Gospel of John,” *NTS* 25 (1978) 103–112.

people" (1:11). In the body of the Gospel that rejection is filled out in terms of the attempt to arrest (7:30 etc.) and to kill Jesus (5:18 etc.). It is also extended in the theme of the rejection of the followers of Jesus, especially signaled by in the language concerning the casting out of the believers from the synagogue (ἀποσυνάγωγος) by the Jews (9:22, 34; 12:42; 16:2). This suggests that the Prologue is to be understood in a context where believers were in conflict with other Jews in the diaspora. Conflict is expressed in terms of the rejection of Jesus and those who believe in him. In the midst of an overwhelming theme of rejection (1:10–11), the Prologue introduces an account of those who receive the incarnate *Logos*, who believe in him, in his name (1:12).

Clearly, in the Prologue reception and belief are presented as the exception, not the dominant response. This is also the perspective of the body of the Gospel as a whole and of the Farewell discourses in particular. The response of the Prologue, and the body of the Gospel, is to proclaim the superiority of the new and the replacement of the old in the *Logos* made flesh (1:14–18). If the old age had seen a minority response to the shining of the light of the eternal *Logos*, in what way did the coming of the *Logos* made flesh change the situation for the better? A receiving response continued to be the exception (1:11–12), and the Gospel as a whole describes only a small number of believers. One advance might be understood in terms of the new understanding of God and its implications for believing community. The latter is more evident in the body of the Gospel (13:34–35).

The Prologue draws on a general Wisdom tradition and a *Logos* theology influenced by Hellenistic philosophy. It also suggests that a particular tradition is being modified or rejected. The initial response to the *Logos* made flesh is described in terms of the response to Wisdom in the Wisdom literature. Rejected by the world but received by Israel? Certainly rejected by the world but also rejected by his own, by Israel (1:10–11). It is said of Wisdom, "in every generation she passes into holy souls and makes them friends of God and prophets" (Wis 7:27; cf. Sir 6:20–22; 15:7). This seems to be the tradition that is used in the Prologue to proclaim the incarnation of the *Logos* and to describe the response to that event.

The tradition of Wisdom 7 (which is echoed in other texts) describes a succession of those into whom Wisdom passed, making them friends of God and prophets. In other words, Wisdom is embodied in this

succession. But the Prologue takes this tradition and uses it to express the response to the *Logos* made flesh. Does this imply that John 1:14 is to be understood in terms of Wisdom 7:27? That would mean that John 1:14 is to be understood as a continuing example of the embodiment of Wisdom in a succession of holy souls. But this does not take account of the fact that the reasons for using this tradition in the Prologue exclusively to refer to the response to the *Logos* made flesh.

Because the Wisdom literature is rich in literary parallels (to John 1:10–12) that depict the role of Wisdom in the world, in Israel and in those she makes friends of God and prophets, many scholars read John 1:9–13 in relation to the role of the *Logos* prior to the incarnation. Additional support for this view is found in the impression that John 1:14 announces the incarnation. The placement of the witness of the Baptist at 1:6–8 disturbs this reading but is itself problematic. It is the first of three introductions of the witness of the Baptist in John 1 (1:6–8, 15, 19f.). There is a suspicion that 1:6–8 has been inserted into an existing composition. The suspicion is not based primarily on the distinction between poetry and prose, though this might be viewed as confirmation of the suspicion.

Read without 1:6–8, everything prior to 1:14 refers to the situation prior to the incarnation. Consequently 1:12 might refer to a succession of those who embodied the *Logos*, and reference to the *Logos* made flesh in Jesus (1:14) can be understood as part of the succession. Those embodying the *Logos* prior to Jesus are then described in terms similar to those who believe in Jesus. They are born of God, children of God. From this perspective the succession prior to Jesus and those who believe in Jesus become like Jesus. On this reading, the source used in the Prologue is understood in terms quite similar to the Gospel of *Thomas*.

From this perspective, the reason for the introduction of 1:6–8 is not to repudiate role of the Baptist but to signal that all that follows concerns the *Logos* made flesh. The role of the *Logos* made flesh is distinguished more sharply from those who preceded him than in the source. The Prologue opposes a Christological view that understood Jesus to be part of a succession of those in whom Wisdom, or the *Logos*, was embodied. The Prologue also distinguishes Jesus from those who followed after him. Here there is a need to discuss how “children of God,” those “born of God,” are to be distinguished from the *Logos* made flesh, the only begotten God who is in the

bosom of the Father (1:14, 18). For the Prologue those begotten of God are those who believe in the name of his son Jesus Christ. Christocentricity ensures that believers are not understood to be exactly the same as the *Logos* made flesh. One reason why this cannot be is that, for John, Christocentricity is Theocentricity. Essential to the Prologue is the affirmation, "the *Logos* was God." The role of the *Logos* made flesh is to reveal God and the Prologue and the Gospel as a whole speak of the *Logos* made flesh at points where the traditional view of God is expanded or modified. This distinguishes the *Logos* made flesh from those who believe in his name.

JESUS – DER NEUE TEMPEL?
EIN KRITISCHER BLICK AUF DIE AUSLEGUNG
VON JOH 2,13–22

Jarl Henning Ulrichsen

1. *Einleitung*

Der vorliegende Aufsatz behandelt eine Perikope, für die sich auch der Jubilar interessiert hat.¹ Seine Fragestellung findet freilich in der vorliegenden Studie keinen Widerhall. Hier steht vor allem die Frage nach dem angeblich tieferen Sinn dieses Stücks im Blickfeld. Nach der Auslegung vieler Exegeten handelt es sich in Joh 2,13ff. in letzter Instanz um eine Ersetzung des Tempels in Jerusalem durch einen neuen Tempel, nämlich den Leib Jesu. Diese Ansicht läßt sich mit einigen Zitaten belegen:

His own body . . . is to be the true Temple, the house of prayer for all the nations.²

The Temple of Jerusalem may have been destroyed, but it has been replaced by the body of Jesus which is the true Temple (2:19–21).³

The main idea, that of the replacement of the old temple (or order of religion) by a new one, is plain enough . . .⁴

One need not doubt as to the message of Jn 2:13–22. The body of Jesus is a temple which replaces the one in Jerusalem . . .⁵

. . . die Person Jesu Christi, der selbst der wahre ‘Tempel’ ist. . . in ihm findet auch die wahre Gottesbegegnung statt.⁶

¹ S. Anm. 8.

² C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text* (2nd ed.; London: SPCK, 1978) 195.

³ R. E. Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple: The Life, Loves, and Hates of an Individual Church in New Testament Times* (Mahwah: Pauline Press, 1979) 49; vgl. *idem*, *The Gospel according to John I–XII: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 29; 2nd ed.; New York: Doubleday, 1987) 123–5.

⁴ C. H. Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1953) 301.

⁵ Lars Hartman, “‘He spoke of the Temple of His Body’ (Jn 2:13–22),” *SEA* 54 (1989) 70.

⁶ Rudolf Schnackenburg, *Das Johannesevangelium, I. Teil. Einleitung und Kommentar zu Kap. 1–4*, Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament, Band IV (3. Aufl.; Freiburg, Basel und Wien: Herder, 1972) 370.

Dieses Verständnis der Perikope scheint sich in der Exegese eingebürgert zu haben und ist heute Gemeingut vieler Kommentare und sonstiger Arbeiten zum Johannesevangelium. Es erübrigt sich deshalb, noch weitere Beispiele zu zitieren. Ich meine, daß sich diese Auslegung nicht mit einer unbefangenen Lektüre des Textes vereinbaren läßt. Die primäre Absicht des vorliegenden Aufsatzes ist, die Schwächen der geläufigen Auffassung nachzuweisen. Daneben wird im Rahmen eines kurzen Abschnittes ein skizzenhafter Versuch gemacht, ein alternatives Verständnis zu begründen.

Zunächst folgt dieser Einleitung in Abschnitt 2 eine Übersicht über den Aufbau der Perikope. Dann werden in den Abschnitten 3–9 die Verse der Perikope der Reihe nach erklärt. In Abschnitt 10 kehren wir auf die Hauptproblemstellung zurück und stellen in Abschnitt 11 die Frage nach der Absicht der Perikope. In Abschnitt 12 folgt schließlich eine kurze Zusammenfassung der Ergebnisse.

Zur Methode ist nicht viel zu sagen, da es sich um eine Arbeit handelt, die sich innerhalb der etablierten, allgemein anerkannten Exegese bewegt. Am Ende von Abschnitt 2 komme ich freilich auf einige Methodenerwägungen zurück. Es scheint mir vorteilhaft, diese Überlegungen aufzuschieben, weil der Evangelist mittels des Aufbaus der Perikope verrät, wo die Schwerpunkte des Textes liegen, und wie der Text somit zu verstehen ist.

2. Zum Aufbau der Perikope

Der Abschnitt fängt mit einer Zeit- und Ortsangabe an und fällt dann in zwei deutlich abgrenzbare Teile, und zwar VV. 14–17 und VV. 18–22. Im ersten Teil steht die Aktion Jesu im Tempelbezirk, die sogenannte Tempelreinigung, im Blickfeld, im zweiten die Frage der Juden nach einer Autorisation Jesu, die seine Aktion rechtfertigen könne.

Schematisch läßt sich der Aufbau folgendermaßen veranschaulichen:⁷

- | | | |
|---------------|-----------------------|--|
| (1) V. 13 | Rahmen (Zeit und Ort) | |
| (2) VV. 14–17 | Tempelreinigung | |
| | VV. 14–15 | Aktion Jesu |
| | V. 16 | Wort Jesu |
| | V. 17 | Erinnerung der Jünger
(ein Schriftwort) |

⁷ Vgl. z.B. Schnackenburg, *Das Johannesevangelium, I. Teil* 360.

(3) VV. 18–22	Legitimationsfrage	
	V. 18	Reaktion der Juden
	V. 19	Rätselwort Jesu
	V. 20	Mißverstehen der Juden
	V. 21	Kommentar des Evangelisten
	V. 22	Erinnerung der Jünger

Der Jubilar glaubt, eine andere Struktur zu finden.⁸ Er hält den Text für ein Beispiel der Gattung “case-commentary-texts” und argumentiert für die Einteilung 2,13–16 (“case”) und 2,17–22 (“commentary”). Für diese Annahme führt er u.a. an, daß der Begriff οἶκος aus 2,16 in 2,17 aufgegriffen werde, daß 2,17 die Deutung einleite, und daß ταῦτα in 2,18 auf die Handlung zurückweise. In einer Festschrift hätte man natürlich der Ansicht des Jubilars gern zustimmen wollen. Meines Erachtens zwingen aber seine Argumente nicht zu einer Revision der obigen, herkömmlichen Einteilung. V. 16 und V. 17 lassen sich kaum trennen und auf zwei verschiedene Blöcke verteilen. Vielmehr scheint für das Schema zu sprechen, daß jeder der beiden Hauptteile mit einer Erinnerung der Jünger endet. Die Partikel οὖν in 2,18 steht übrigens bei dem von Borgen gewählten Aufbau am falschen Platz. Sie zeigt deutlich, daß V. 18 einen Neueinsatz bringt.

Der Stoff unseres Abschnittes stammt höchstwahrscheinlich aus der synoptischen Tradition, und man darf vermuten, daß Johannes das Markusevangelium gekannt und benutzt hat.⁹ Dabei hat Johannes freilich Perikopen zusammengestellt, die in der synoptischen Überlieferung als separate Stücke auftreten. Die Episode der Tempelreinigung findet sich in jedem der drei anderen Evangelien (Matt 21,12–17; Markus 11,15–19; Lukas 19,45–46). Die Legitimationsfrage der Juden kommt in Matt 21,23, Markus 11,27–28 und Lukas 20,1–2 vor, knüpft aber nicht unmittelbar an die Aktion Jesu im Tempel an, sondern ist von dieser getrennt. Das Wort über die Zerstörung des Tempels, das in zwei der synoptischen Evangelien begegnet (Matt 26,61; 27,40; Markus 14,58; 15,29) und außerdem in der Anklage

⁸ P. Borgen, “John and the Synoptics,” *Early Christianity and Hellenistic Judaism*, hsg. von P. Borgen (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1996) 121–56 (ursprünglich in D. L. Dungan, Hg., *The Interrelations of the Gospels*, BETL 95 [Leuven: Peeters, 1990] 438–50).

⁹ Vgl. z.B. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St John*, 195. Anders z.B. der Jubilar, “John and the Synoptics.”

gegen Stephanus in Apg 6,14 einen Niederschlag gefunden hat, erfährt im Johannesevangelium eine originelle Umdeutung, die später zu behandeln ist. Einzelheiten über die Vorgeschichte der Perikope werden hier nicht erörtert, da sie für die vorliegende Problemstellung ohne Belang sind. Hier kommt es vor allem darauf an, den vorliegenden Text zu verstehen.

Auf die johanneische Ansetzung der Episode am Anfang der öffentlichen Wirksamkeit Jesu braucht auch nicht eingegangen zu werden. Ich halte mit der Mehrzahl neutestamentlicher Exegeten die Einordnung des Evangelisten für chronologisch falsch und stattdessen für theologisch begründet,¹⁰ aber für die Problemstellung des vorliegenden Aufsatzes spielt diese Frage keine Rolle.

Bereits ein Blick auf den Text läßt ahnen, daß Aussagen und Kommentare die Basis für das richtige Verständnis der Aktion Jesu bilden müssen. Die Vermutung liegt nahe, daß der deutlich parenthetische Kommentar in V. 21, die Erinnerungen der Jünger in V. 17 und V. 22 sowie die Worte Jesu in V. 16 und V. 19 den Sinn des Textes zum Ausdruck bringen.

Die bereits in der Einleitung angedeutete Problemstellung und die Argumente, die für die vorherrschende Exegese angeführt werden, sind jetzt für den Text zu prüfen.

3. *Aktion Jesu (VV. 14–15)*

Die Aktion Jesu findet nach V. 14 im Tempel statt. Damit sind natürlich nicht die eigentlichen Tempelgebäude, sondern der Vorhof der Heiden gemeint. Aus der Fortsetzung geht aber hervor, daß zwischen dem Vorhof und dem Heiligtum im engeren Sinn nicht scharf gesondert wird. Was sich im Vorhof abspielt, gilt für den ganzen Tempel.

Jesus findet im Tempel, sagt der Text, die Verkäufer von Rindern, Schafen und Tauben und die Geldwechsler. Obwohl die Verkaufswirksamkeit innerhalb dieser Situationsbeschreibung nicht leicht zu belegen ist,¹¹ darf man vermuten, daß Johannes und die anderen Evangelisten ein tatsächliches Geschehen schildern. Es wäre für Tempelbesucher, die nicht aus der Nähe von Jerusalem kamen, höchst

¹⁰ Vgl. z.B. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St John*, 195.

¹¹ Str-B 1.760ff., 850ff. erbringen keinen eindeutigen Beleg für diese Wirksamkeit.

unbequem gewesen, Tiere mit sich zu bringen. Nur fällt auf, daß Johannes im Gegensatz zu Mattäus und Markus nicht nur Tauben, sondern auch Rinder und Schafe erwähnt. Die Erwähnung von Schafen ist freilich weniger überraschend, da die Episode kurz vor dem Pascha stattfindet. Da in V. 16a nur von den Taubenhändlern die Rede ist, liegt die Annahme nahe, daß Johannes die Episode erweitert (und vergrößert) hat.

Die Anwesenheit der Geldwechsler ist leicht begreiflich. Nicht nur die Tempelsteuer, sondern auch alle anderen Abgaben an den Tempel mußten in der alten, sogenannten tyrischen Währung bezahlt werden. Da zur Zeit Jesu nur römische Münzen im Umlauf waren, liegt es auf der Hand, daß Geldwechsler nötig waren.

Nach V. 15 macht Jesus eine Geißel aus Stricken – das ist ein neuer Sonderzug des Johannesevangeliums – und treibt damit alle aus dem Tempel hinaus, nicht nur die Verkäufer und die Geldwechsler, sondern auch die Tiere. Die Aktion richtet sich freilich primär gegen die Händler, denn der Akkusativ πάντας nimmt wahrscheinlich auf sie Bezug. Die Erwähnung der Schafe und Rinder knüpft weniger gegliückt am vorhergehenden Text an und wird von einigen Auslegern sogar als ein Zusatz angesehen. Man darf aber vermuten, daß Johannes diese Erwähnung hinzufügt, weil die Tiere natürlich dasselbe Schicksal wie ihre Besitzer erfahren.

Jesus begnügt sich nicht mit dieser Handlung, sondern schüttet auch das Geld der Wechsler aus und stößt ihre Tische um. Von einer Aktion gegen die Käufer ist dagegen keine Rede. Aus dem nächsten Vers ergibt sich außerdem, daß die Taubenhändler anscheinend nicht ausgetrieben wurden, jedenfalls nicht, wenn der nachfolgende Dialog im Tempel zu lokalisieren ist. Die Fokussierung auf die Taubenhändler läßt die von Johannes bearbeitete synoptische Tradition durchschimmern.

Die Erwähnung von Opfertieren in VV. 14–15 spielt in der herkömmlichen Exegese eine zentrale Rolle. Dabei betont man des öfteren, daß Rinder und Schafe für Ganz- und Friedopfer benötigt wurden. So drängt sich die Frage auf, ob die Aktion Jesu sogar als ein Angriff auf den gesamten Tempelkultus zu verstehen ist. Für diese Annahme spricht die Beobachtung, daß Johannes mehr Opfertiere als die übrigen Evangelisten erwähnt. Gegen diese Vermutung erheben sich freilich Bedenken: Jesus agitiert nicht gegen die Opfertiere, die dem Tempel zugehören. Der Tempel besaß natürlich eigene Opfertiere, und die Verkäufer im Vorhof wandten sich nicht an die

Priesterschaft, sondern an ein ganz anderes Publikum. Vor allem hätte man erwartet, daß eine Aktion gegen den Tempeldienst viel deutlicher zum Ausdruck hätte kommen müssen, und daß sie sich aus der nachfolgenden Aussage Jesu ablesen ließe. Das ist aber nicht der Fall, wie V. 16 bestätigt.

4. *Wort Jesu (V. 16)*

In V. 16 folgt das erste Wort Jesu: „Schafft das hier weg, macht das Haus meines Vaters nicht zu einer Markthalle!“ Die Aussage ist nur an die Taubenhändler gerichtet. Die übrigen Akteure stehen nicht mehr im Blickfeld. Die ausdrückliche Hervorhebung, daß der Tempel Haus des Vaters Jesu ist, und die scharfe Anklage, daß diese Verkaufswirksamkeit (der Taubenhändler) dieses Haus zu einer Markthalle macht, ist von größter Bedeutung. Daraus ergibt sich nämlich, daß die Aktion Jesu nach Johannes nicht als eine Aktion gegen den Tempel und den Tempelkultus gemeint ist, sondern vielmehr als eine Aktion gegen die unwürdige Profanierung der heiligen Stätte. Jesus will nach Johannes nicht den Tempel und den Tempeldienst ersetzen, sondern die Heiligkeit des Tempels verteidigen. Diese dem Tempel gegenüber positive Aussage, die der Evangelist Jesu in den Mund legt, zeigt, daß ihm jeder Gedanke an eine Ersetzung des Tempels fern liegt. Hätte Johannes wirklich gemeint, daß die Aktion Jesu als ein Angriff auf die Tempelinstitution zu verstehen sei, hätte er die Worte Jesu kaum so positiv formuliert.

Gegen meine Ansicht meldet sich der Einwand, daß Johannes in Kap. 4 anscheinend von einer Aufhebung der Sonderstellung des Tempels spricht. Im Gespräch mit der samaritanischen Frau läßt Johannes Jesus sagen, daß eine Stunde kommt – ja sie ist schon da – zu der die wahren Anbeter weder auf dem Berg Garizim noch in Jerusalem den Vater anbeten werden. Sie werden ihn vielmehr im Geist und in der Wahrheit anbeten (4,21–23). Im vorliegenden Aufsatz muß auf eine eingehende Besprechung dieser Perikope verzichtet werden. Wesentlich ist aber, daß man auf die Unterschiede der beiden Kapitel 2 und 4 achtet. In Kap. 2 referiert Johannes eine Episode aus dem Leben Jesu und betont seine durchaus positive Haltung dem Tempel gegenüber: Jesus hat aktiv gegen jede Profanierung und Säkularisierung gekämpft. In Kap. 4 handelt es sich nicht nur um eine Episode aus seinem Leben, sondern auch um einen Ausblick

auf die zukünftige Lage der Christusgemeinde. Zur Zeit der Abfassung des Johannesevangeliums war der Tempel in Jerusalem zerstört und eine Anbetung im Tempel war praktisch nicht mehr möglich. Auf diese Situation nimmt die Aussage "aber die Stunde kommt, und sie ist schon da . . ." Rücksicht. Jesus hat nach Johannes vorausgesagt, daß die Jünger einmal erleben werden, daß eine Anbetung im Tempel unmöglich sein werde. In dieser Lage befinden sich die Leser des Johannesevangeliums – "die Stunde ist schon da" –, aber die Zerstörung des Tempels bedeutet zugleich, daß die Anbetung nicht mehr von örtlichen (und zeitlichen) Schranken begrenzt wird. Die Glaubenden können jetzt den Vater im Geist und in der Wahrheit anbeten. Es handelt sich also in Kap. 4 um eine Anbetung *anderer Art*, nicht um ein Ersetzen des Tempels durch einen neuen Tempel, den Leib Jesu. Es kann somit nicht überraschen, daß in Kap. 4 nirgendwo von einem neuen Tempel die Rede ist, sondern nur davon, daß die ortsgebundene Anbetung aufgehoben ist.

Mit dieser Einsicht wird leicht begreiflich, daß der Verfasser des Johannesevangeliums dem historischen Jesus eine unerschütterliche Tempeltreue zumißt. Johannes läßt Jesus immer wieder im Tempel auftreten und an verschiedenen Tempelfesten teilnehmen, ohne ihm die geringste Kritik dem Tempel gegenüber in den Mund zu legen. Ganz offensichtlich liegt es ihm fern, von einer Opposition Jesu zum Tempel zu reden.

5. *Erinnerung der Jünger (V. 17)*

Daß die Aktion Jesu nicht als ein Angriff auf den Tempel und den Tempelkultus zu deuten ist, wird von der ersten der Erinnerungsaussagen bestätigt. Die Jünger erinnern sich, sagt Johannes, an das Wort der Schrift: "Der Eifer für dein Haus wird mich verzehren." Jesu Eingriff wird also als Eifer für den Tempel erklärt, und die Schrift hat nach Johannes die Episode vorausgesagt. Viele Exegeten sehen in diesem Zitat einen versteckten Hinweis auf das Schicksal Jesu und deuten es auf seinen Tod.¹² Dabei verweist man des öfteren einerseits auf die Tatsache, daß sich Johannes des Futurs bedient, während der Psalmist eine Vergangenheitsform benutzt, andererseits

¹² So z.B. Schnackenburg, *Das Johannesevangelium, I. Teil*, 362.

auf die bald erwachende Todfeindschaft der Juden, die hier vorgreifend prophezeit werde.

Das erste Argument ist nicht wesentlich. Das Psalmwort wird von Johannes als eine Weissagung verstanden und deshalb folgerichtig in ein Futur umgewandelt.¹³ Das Futur greift also nicht Ereignisse vor, die sich erst nach der Tempelreinigung abspielen, sondern beruht darauf, daß die Schrift nach Johannes von Jesus zeugt und redet. Das zweite Argument mutet auf den ersten Blick recht überzeugend an, erweist sich aber bei näherem Hinsehen als unzulänglich. In der alttestamentlichen Vorlage ist unbedingt an einen verzehrenden Eifer gedacht, und der Gedanke, daß der Eifer des Psalmisten ihm das Leben kosten konnte, liegt dort nicht vor. Es besteht kein zwingender Grund, Johannes ein anderes Verständnis unterzuschieben.¹⁴ Nach Johannes haben die Jünger nach einer Begründung der Aktion Jesu gesucht, und diese Begründung haben sie gerade im Psalmwort gefunden. Ich sehe nicht, wie diese Funktion gewährt bleiben könnte, falls hier eigentlich ein versteckter Hinweis auf den Tod Jesu vorliegen sollte.

6. *Reaktion der Juden (V. 18)*

Ganz unvermittelt treten nun die Juden auf. Da sie nicht näher definiert werden, bleibt ihre Identität unklar. Man denkt aber am einfachsten an die Tempelaufseher, "die die Schlüssel- und Ordnungsgewalt im Tempel innehatten und denen auch die levitische Tempelpolizei . . . unterstand".¹⁵ Sie fordern ein Zeichen, eine göttliche Legitimation, die bestätigen kann, daß die Aktion Jesu rechtmäßig ist. Denn auch wenn seine Handlung nicht als ein regelrechter Angriff auf den Tempeldienst aufzufassen ist, muß seine Aktion in jedem Fall anstößig wirken, da der Handel von Opfertieren im Tempelbezirk von den obersten Tempelbehörden nicht nur gebilligt, sondern vermutlich auch eingeführt wurde. Es handelt sich also mindestens um

¹³ Der hebräische Text von Psalm 69,10 hat Perfektum. Die griechischen Septuagintahandschriften weisen teils Aorist, teils Futur auf. Man darf vermuten, daß das Futur auf Angleichung an den neutestamentlichen Text beruht, der nach den besten Textzeugen *καταφάγεται* hat.

¹⁴ So mit Recht Barrett, *The Gospel according to St John* 198f.

¹⁵ Schnackenburg, *Das Johannesevangelium, I. Teil*, 363.

einen Angriff auf die Autorität der Tempelaufseher, und ihre Frage nach Jesu Vollmacht ist somit höchst verständlich.

7. *Rätselwort Jesu (V. 19) und Mißverständnis der Juden (V. 20)*

Die Antwort Jesu ist nicht unbedingt ablehnend, er geht aber auch nicht direkt auf ihre Forderung ein. Vielmehr läßt ihn der Evangelist eine Antwort geben, die gewissermaßen herausfordernd klingt: "Reißt diesen¹⁶ Tempel nieder, und in drei Tagen werde ich ihn wieder aufrichten." Nach dem nächstliegenden Sinn bedeutet diese Aussage, daß sich seine Vollmacht, dem Handel ein Ende zu setzen, nachprüfen läßt. Falls die Juden die große Tempelanlage niederreißen, wird Jesus sie in nur drei Tagen wieder aufrichten. Die Antwort setzt scheinbar voraus, daß bei einem derartigen Wiederaufbau ihm Gott zur Seite stehen und den Tempel selbst errichten werde.

Daß dieses nächstliegende Verständnis freilich nicht der eigentliche Sinn der Aussage ist, geht aus der Fortsetzung hervor (vgl. V. 21). Johannes läßt aber die Juden sein Wort wörtlich nehmen und einen logischen Einwand äußern: "Sechsendvierzig Jahre wurde an diesem Tempel gebaut und du willst ihn in drei Tagen wieder aufrichten?" Jesu Antwort mutet als Unsinn an: Beinahe 50 Jahre baut man an dem Tempel, ohne ihn fertigstellen zu können, und nun verspricht Jesus diese Aufgabe in nur drei Tagen realisieren zu können.

8. *Kommentar des Evangelisten (V. 21)*

Aus dem Kommentar des Evangelisten ergibt sich, daß der Replikwechsel in VV. 19–20 ein typisches Beispiel der johanneischen Mißverständnisse darstellt. Jetzt erkennt man, daß Jesus gar nicht von dem irdischen Tempel gesprochen hat. Die Juden haben ihn zwar so verstanden, weil sie nur auf den äußerlichen, wörtlichen Sinn seines Wortes geachtet haben. Für sie bedeutet "Tempel" natürlich der herodianische Tempel. Die Frage, ob die Juden nicht zu einem übertragenen Verständnis fähig gewesen sind, ist nicht am Platz. Es han-

¹⁶ Viele Kommentare merken mit Recht an, daß das verweisende Pronomen "dieser" im Ausdruck "dieser Tempel" ganz unbetont ist. "Abwegig ist die Auffassung, Jesus habe dabei auf seinen eigenen Leib gezeigt; da würde das jüdische Mißverständnis ungläubwürdig," schreibt Schnackenburg, *Das Johannesevangelium, I. Teil*, 364.

delt sich im Johannesevangelium um ein rhetorisches Stilmittel: Die Juden mißverstehen, wann immer ein Mißverstehen möglich ist (vgl. z.B. 3,3ff. u.ö.). Johannes hat diesem Mißverständnis sogar nachgeholfen, da die in der Antwort Jesu vorkommenden Verben λύω und ἐγείρω geläufige Ausdrücke für "ein Bauwerk abbrechen, niederreißen"¹⁷ und "ein Bauwerk aufrichten, errichten"¹⁸ sind.

Zugleich liefert aber der Evangelist auch das richtige Verständnis der Aussage. Jesus hat nicht von dem sichtbaren, irdischen Tempel geredet, sondern von dem Tempel seines Leibes. Daß der Begriff "Tempel" als Metapher für "Leib" benutzt werden kann, ist bekannt und bedarf kaum eines näheren Nachweises. Es genügt, auf neutestamentliche Beispiele wie 1 Kor 3,16f.; 6,19 und Philons *De opificio mundi* 137 zu verweisen. Außerdem ist zu beachten, daß die Auslegung des Evangelisten kaum als gezwungen anmutet, da die Verben λύω und ἐγείρω auch mit dem von ihm geforderten Sinn vereinbar sind. Vor allem kommt ἐγείρω an zahlreichen Stellen im Neuen Testament vor, wenn es sich um die Auferstehung Jesu handelt.

9. Erinnerung der Jünger (V. 22)

V. 22 bringt die zweite Erinnerung der Lehrjünger. Aus ihr geht hervor, daß das Mißverständnis der Juden begreiflich war, denn die Jünger haben die Aussage Jesu auch nicht verstanden. Nur im nachösterlichen Licht der Auferstehung haben sie gesehen, daß Jesus nicht von dem steinernen Tempel gesprochen hat, sondern von dem Tempel seines Leibes. Auch ihnen ist also das Wort ein Rätsel geblieben, bis sie den richtigen Interpretationsschlüssel gefunden haben. In diesem neuen Licht haben sie der Schrift und dem Wort, das Jesus gesprochen hat, geglaubt. Worauf der Hinweis auf die Schrift Bezug nimmt, bleibt freilich unklar. Einige Exegeten sehen darin einen Verweis auf V. 17, aber dieses Verständnis ist nur dann möglich, wenn man in V. 17 eine Weissagung des Todes Jesu findet, und das halte ich für eine Mißdeutung.

¹⁷ Vgl. W. Bauer, *Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der frühchristlichen Literatur*, hrsg. von Kurt Aland und Barbara Aland (6. völlig neu bearbeitete Aufl.; Berlin und New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1988) 981.

¹⁸ Vgl. Bauer, *Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch* 432.

10. *Jesus – der neue Tempel?*

Viele Exegeten finden, wie oben erwähnt, in diesem Abschnitt einen tieferen Sinn. In der Auslegung dieser Perikope kommt immer wieder die Vermutung zum Ausdruck, Johannes spreche von einer Ersetzung des Tempels in Jerusalem. Ich habe bereits in der Einleitung einige typische Aussagen zitiert, die deutlich ein solches Verständnis favorisieren. Dabei stützen sich diese Ausleger natürlich nicht ausschließlich auf die vorliegende Perikope, sondern auch auf viele andere Texte und Einzelaussagen. Eine wesentliche Rolle spielt u.a. das Gespräch Jesu mit der Samariterin in Kap. 4. Der Umfang dieses Aufsatzes erlaubt keine gründliche Besprechung und Widerlegung all dieser Argumente. Ich muß mich auf den vorliegenden Text beschränken, der meines Erachtens Jesus nicht als den wahren Tempel beschreibt, der den irdischen Tempel ersetzt.

Daß der Leib Jesu als ein Tempel in einem übertragenen Sinn des Wortes betrachtet wird, ist natürlich nicht zu leugnen. Das wird ja ausdrücklich in dem Text gesagt. Es bleibt mir aber unklar, wie sein Leib ein Tempel oder ein Haus des Gebetes für alle Völker im eigentlichen Sinn sein kann. Von einer Ersetzung ist tatsächlich nirgendwo die Rede, und der Leib Jesu wird auch nicht als ein *neuer* Tempel charakterisiert. Vielmehr spricht bereits die Aussage in V. 16 gegen diese Annahme von einem tieferen Sinn; denn dort wird betont, daß der Tempel Haus Gottes ist. Deshalb greift Jesus, wie wir gesehen haben, nicht den Tempel an, sondern nur die Profanierung des Tempels.

Entscheidend gegen die vorherrschende Annahme spricht vor allem der Kommentar des Evangelisten. Er betont, daß Jesus nicht vom Tempel gesprochen hat, sondern *nur* von seinem Leib. Von einer Ersetzung des Tempels zu reden, wenn der Tempel nach der Aussage des Evangelisten völlig außerhalb des Blickfelds steht, stellt meiner Meinung nach eine grobe Eisegeese dar. Nach dem Text selber haben die Juden freilich geglaubt, daß er vom Tempel geredet habe, und sogar die Jünger haben die Aussage erst im nachösterlichen Licht richtig verstanden. Ein tieferer Sinn liegt also freilich vor, er hat aber nichts mit einer Ersetzung des irdischen Tempels zu tun, sondern besteht darin, daß Jesus rätselhaft von seinem Leib gesprochen hat. Da diese Metapher geläufig ist, erweist sich die Annahme, Johannes habe mit diesem Bild implizit die Vorstellung von einem neuen Tempel eingeführt, als unberechtigt.

11. *Absicht der Perikope*

Die Frage drängt sich auf, warum Johannes überhaupt diese Szene mitteilt. Ich vermute, daß es sich eigentlich um eine Art Verteidigung handelt, die sich gegen die Beschuldigung der Juden richtet, daß Jesus den Tempel und den Tempeldienst angegriffen habe. Diese Vermutung wird verständlicher, wenn wir uns ein wenig in die zugrundeliegenden synoptischen Traditionen vertiefen, die freilich im Rahmen dieses Aufsatzes nur skizzenhaft dargestellt werden können.

Ich halte es für wahrscheinlich, daß sich Jesus kritisch gegen den Tempel geäußert und seine Zerstörung prophezeit hat, wenn auch viele Einzelheiten unklar bleiben müssen. Die Evangelien überliefern nicht nur die sogenannte synoptische Apokalypse (Markus 13 mit Parr.), sondern referieren auch die Anklage, die im Prozeß gegen ihn vorgebracht wurde. Im Verhör vor dem hohen Rat wird sowohl in Markus 14,58 als auch in Matt 26,61 die Beschuldigung erhoben, Jesus habe gesagt, er werde den Tempel niederreißen und in drei Tagen einen neuen Tempel errichten. Im Lukasevangelium fehlt eine entsprechende Anklage, aber in der Apostelgeschichte liegt eine Parallele vor. Im Zusammenhang mit der Verhaftung des Stephanus wird betont, daß er Mose und Gott lästere, und im Verhör vor dem Hohen Rat wird gesagt, daß Stephanus gegen den heiligen Ort und das Gesetz rede. Dabei wird hervorgehoben, daß seine Lehre in letzter Instanz auf Jesus zurückgehe, weil Stephanus gesagt habe, Jesus werde den heiligen Ort zerstören und die Bräuche ändern, die Mose überliefert hat.

Die Verfasser der synoptischen Evangelien meinen offenbar, daß es sich um eine unberechtigte, ja direkt falsche Anklage handelt. Markus 14,57 nennt die Zeugen falsche Zeugen, und entsprechende Aussagen finden sich auch in Matt 26,59ff. und Apg 6,13. Johannes wählt, falls ich richtig deute, eine andere Lösung. Er leugnet nicht, daß Jesus tatsächlich Aussagen getroffen hat, die *scheinbar* auf den Tempel Bezug nehmen. Johannes läßt freilich Jesus nicht sagen, er werde den Tempel zerstören. Vielmehr formuliert er die Aussage Jesu als eine Herausforderung an die Juden. Falls *sie* den Tempel niederreißen, werde Jesus ihn in drei Tagen wieder errichten. Die Grundlage der Beschuldigung wird dabei abgeschwächt, weil eine direkte Drohung gegen den Tempel nicht mehr in den Mund Jesu gelegt wird. Die Anklage wird dann endgültig dadurch entkräftet, daß Johannes eine geniale Deutung der Aussage Jesus vermittelt.

Jesus hat, sagt Johannes, auch wenn die Juden ihn so verstanden und mißverstanden haben, gar nicht den Tempel in Jerusalem gemeint, sondern nur seinen Leib.

Die Frage, warum die Johannesgemeinde eine Verteidigung nötig hatte, ist nicht schwer zu beantworten. Die Antwort findet sich in 9,22; 12,42; 16,2, die deutlich davon zeugen, daß das Johannesevangelium einer Konfliktsituation entsprungen ist. Zur Zeit der Abfassung der Schrift waren die Johanneschristen entweder bereits aus der Synagoge ausgestossen oder aber von einem Bann bedroht. Diese Situation wurde ihnen aufgezwungen, sie wählten sich nicht freiwillig. In dieser Lage war es dringend notwendig, die Treue ihres Stifters der Tempelinstitution gegenüber zu betonen. Auf die Anklage, Jesus habe die allerheiligste Institution des Judentums scharf kritisiert, ja sogar verworfen, entgegnete Johannes, daß diese Beschuldigung auf einem Mißverständnis beruhe. Zur Ergänzung des Bildes gehören deshalb die vielen Stellen, an denen der johanneische Jesus in der Synagoge auftritt oder sich an den offiziellen Festen beteiligt, weil auch sie davon zeugen, daß Jesus nicht gegen die fundamentalen Institutionen des Judentums opponiert hat.

12. *Zusammenfassung*

Viele Exegeten finden in Joh 2,13–22 einen tieferen Sinn. Sie meinen, daß die Perikope von einer Ersetzung des Tempels durch einen neuen Tempel, den Leib Jesu, handelt. Diese Ansicht widerspricht den klaren Aussagen des Textes. Johannes bezeichnet zwar den Leib Jesu als einen Tempel, von einer Ersetzung des Tempels in Jerusalem mit diesem Tempelleib ist aber nirgendwo die Rede. Der Text des Johannesevangeliums zeigt vielmehr, daß die Anklage der Juden, Jesu habe sich kritisch gegen den Tempel geäußert, auf einem Mißverständnis beruht.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND THE KINGSHIP OF CHRIST IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL

Hans Kvalbein

One of the most striking differences between the Gospel of John and the Synoptic Gospels is the use of the phrase ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ, the kingdom of God. In the Synoptic Gospels it occurs frequently, both in sayings of Jesus and in redactional comments and summaries, and functions as the central expression for the message of Jesus. In the Gospel of John, however, it is only found twice, in two solemn sayings in Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus in chapter 3:

Truly, truly I say to you, unless one is born from above (or: born again) he cannot see the kingdom of God. (v. 3)

Truly, truly I say to you, unless one is born of water and spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. (v. 5)

The two sayings have a parallel structure with conditional clauses giving "entrance requirements" for the kingdom of God.¹ The commentaries have traditionally been more interested in explaining the condition or protasis: What does it mean to be "born again" or "born from above" and to be "born of water and spirit"? In this article I want to focus on the apodosis or the second part of the sayings: what does it mean to "see" or to "enter" "the kingdom of God"? What is the probable meaning of βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ in this context in the Fourth Gospel, and how does it relate to the second context in John's Gospel where we find the word βασιλεία, in John 18:36? There Jesus speaks three times about his own βασιλεία, not about the βασιλεία of God. It is traditionally translated "kingdom," just as in 3:3–5: "My *kingdom* is not of this world: if my *kingdom* were of this world, then would my servants fight . . . but now is my *kingdom* not from hence." (18:36 AV, my italics). But can we be sure

¹ "Entrance requirements" or "Einlasssprüche" is a term coined for these and corresponding Synoptic sayings by H. Windisch: "Die Sprüche vom Eingehen in das Reich Gottes" *ZNW* 27 (1928) 163–192. A recent discussion of these texts is presented in F. W. Horn, "Die synoptischen Einlasssprüche" *ZNW* 87 (1996) 187–203.

that the meaning and the referent of βασιλεία in these two contexts are the same?

1. *The Meaning of βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ*

The Greek word βασιλεία is derived from βασιλεύς, “king”, and has two basic lexical meanings:² (1) Used as a verbal noun or *nomen actionis* it means the act of ruling and can be translated “kingship,” “royal rule,” or “reign,” referring to the position or activity of a king. This is also called the abstract or the dynamic meaning of the word. (2) The word can also mean “kingdom,” i.e., the realm ruled by a king, his territory or the community under his rule. This is also called the concrete or static meaning of the word. The concrete meaning does not necessarily imply the presence of a king. In Matt 12:26 Satan has a βασιλεία, but Satan is never called a βασιλεύς. The “kingdoms of the world” that Satan shows Jesus in the temptation story (Matt 4:8; Luke 4:5) no doubt include territories not ruled by a king.

The traditional translation of βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ according to the second lexical meaning, “kingdom” of God, with its concrete and spatial connotations, has come under severe attack. Among New Testament scholars today it seems to have been broadly accepted that the phrase ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ in the Gospels should not be conceived as a concrete kingdom or a realm, but as a *nomen actionis* denoting God’s function as a king, his “reign” or “rule.”³ The revised edition of Bauer’s lexicon by F. Danker (note 2) suggests the translation “the royal reign” of God under the heading “the act of ruling”. This corresponds to the German expression “Königsherrschaft Gottes” in Bauer’s *Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament* both before and

² F. W. Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2000) 168.

³ G. Dalman, *Die Worte Jesu* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1898, expanded edition 1930), English translation: *The Words of Jesus* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1909) was the first to argue for this understanding from the linguistic background of the expression in Hebrew and Aramaic. His influence can be traced in many monographies on the topic, e.g. R. Schnackenburg, *Gottes Herrschaft und Reich: Eine biblisch-theologische Studie* (2nd ed.; Freiburg-Basel-Wien: Herder, 1961); J. Jeremias: *Neutestamentliche Theologie, erster Teil: Die Verkündigung Jesu* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn, 1971) 101–2; G. Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Exeter: Paternoster, 1986) 74; G. E. Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974) 74 (new edition by Don Hagner 1993); B. D. Chilton, *God in Strength: Jesus’ Announcement of the Kingdom* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987).

after the revision of the 6th edition by K. and B. Aland. The *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament based on Semantic Domains* directly warns against the traditional translation "kingdom" and recommends "rule" or the fact of ruling as the proper understanding of the phrase:

It is generally a serious mistake to translate the phrase βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ "the kingdom of God" as referring to a particular area in which God rules. The meaning of this phrase in the NT involves not a particular place or special period of time but the fact of ruling. An expression such as "to enter the kingdom of God" thus does not refer to "going to heaven" but should be understood as "accepting God's rule" or "welcoming God to rule over."⁴

I am not convinced that this common opinion can be maintained, particularly not in relation to the expression "enter the kingdom of God", which we find in John 3:5. I doubt that the Johannine Jesus here really would say: "unless one is born of water and spirit, he cannot 'accept God's rule' or 'welcome God to rule over' him". This would give a moralistic interpretation of the term corresponding to the rabbinic expression "take upon oneself the yoke of the rule of heaven", which referred to the reading the Shema and accepting the obligation of the Law.⁵ I think the interpretation described by the lexicon as a "serious mistake" may in fact be the best key to understanding the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ sayings. My teacher Sverre Aalen wrote against the stream already in the early 1960's and maintained a concrete and spatial meaning of βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ in the message of Jesus.⁶ In recent years a small, but growing number of New Testament scholars have argued for the local significance of the phrase.⁷

⁴ Johannes P. Louw & Eugene A. Nida (eds.), *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains* (2 vols.; New York: United Bible Societies, 1988) 1:480.

⁵ Ber. 2.2, see Dalman, *Words of Jesus*, 98, 124.

⁶ Sverre Aalen: "'Reign' and 'House' in the Kingdom of God in the Gospels", *NTS* 8 (1962) 215–240, and "Guds kungavälde eller Guds rike?" *SEA* 30 (1965) 37ff. Both articles were reprinted in his collected essays S. Aalen, *Guds Sønn og Guds rike: Nyltestamentlige studier* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1973).

⁷ Aalen's view was first accepted by Hans Conzelmann, *Grundriss der Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, (München: Kaiser, 1968) 126. He summarized Aalen's views in this way: "Man kann die Faustregel aufstellen: Im Judentum bedeutet der Ausdruck: den Akt des Herrschens Gottes; Bei Jesus: Gottes Reich."—In the Festschrift presented to Sverre Aalen, *Israel—Kristus—Kirken*, ed. I. Asheim, *et al.* (Oslo, Bergen and Tromsø: Universitetsforlaget, 1979), three of his students further developed his thesis: Ernst Baasland, "Oppstandelsestroen i lys av Jesu forkynnelse om Guds rike,"

The interpretation of the phrase must be based on the actual use of it in its syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations.⁸ A good survey of syntagms containing the phrase βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ was given already by Dalman, whose main categories were the following:⁹

- 1) The βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ is the object of verbs for preaching and teaching. These expressions are used almost exclusively in Luke-Acts.
- 2) The βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ is the subject of verbs for coming, arriving, come near, appear. Such expressions are found in the summaries of the message of Jesus and in the kingdom prayer in the Lord's prayer.
- 3) The βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ is the object of verbs for seeing, to expect or look for.
- 4) The βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ is "an order of things under which men are placed" expressed as being "in" the βασιλεία. The image of the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ as a meal belongs here.
- 5) Closely connected to this idea is the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ as a place where men may enter and be invited, or which can be closed and from which men can be excluded.

Hans Kvalbein, "Kirken og Guds rike i Jesu forkynnelse etter de synoptiske evangelier," and Oskar Skarsaune, "Patristiske merknader til begrepet 'Guds rike'" (119–182). Aalen's view was independently supported by O'Neill: "The Kingdom of God" *NovT* 34 (1993) 130–141. The spatial and concrete meaning of the phrase is also pointed out by J. Carmignac, *Le mirage de l'eschatologie: royauté, règne et royaume de Dieu sans eschatologie* (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1979), and by George W. Buchanan, *Jesus: The King and his Kingdom* (Macon: Mercer, 1984). Ben Witherington III, *The Christology of Jesus* (Fortress: Minneapolis, 1990) 192–198, concludes that the spatial or local meaning of the phrase cannot be overlooked. He suggests a translation "dominion of God" in order to combine the two meanings "reign" and "kingdom". This is developed further in his book *Jesus, Paul and the End of the World: A Comparative Study of New Testament Eschatology* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1992) 49–74. E. P. Sanders, *The Historical Figure of Jesus* (London: Penguin, 1993) 171–175, categorizes the use of the phrase under six headings, and in four of them he uses the expression "realm" to describe the meaning of βασιλεία. The concrete and spatial connotations of God's *malkut/malkuta* in Jewish texts has been pointed out by K. Koch, "Offenbaren wird sich das Reich Gottes: Die Malkuta Jahwäs im Prophetentargum" *NTS* 25 (1979) 158–165, and by Anna Maria Schwemer, "Gott als König und seine Königsherrschaft in den Sabbatliedern aus Qumran," *Königsherrschaft Gottes und himmlischer Kult*, ed. Martin Hengel and Anna Maria Schwemer (Tübingen: Siebeck Mohr, 1991) 45–118.

⁸ See the chapter on semantics in W. Egger: *Methodenlehre zum Neuen Testament* (Freiburg, Basel and Wien: Herder, 1987) 92–118.

⁹ Similar categorizations can be found in Schnackenburg 1961 (n. 3), Sanders (n. 7).

- 6) The βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ can be conceived as a good which men should seek and strive for, and which may be given to men, attributed to men or inherited by men.

The immediate impression from this list is that the concrete and local meaning fits best to the four last categories, whereas the two first ones are open to both meanings. In a concluding remark Dalman admits that the actual function of the phrase βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ in the Gospel texts does not correspond to the *markuth shamayim* in its abstract meaning, but to another rabbinic expression, [*chayye*] *olam habbah*, “[life in] the world to come”. “This conception is among the Jews . . . a comprehensive term for the blessings of salvation, just as the “Sovereignty of God” is with Jesus”.¹⁰ From a modern semantic viewpoint, this observation is a decisive argument against Dalman’s plea for an abstract understanding of the term. The actual use of a phrase in its context must determine its meaning, not a preconceived opinion of its meaning as a fixed, unchangeable concept.¹¹

2. “Enter the Kingdom of God” in John 3:5

The sayings in John 3:3 and 5 belong to the categories 3 and 5. The first expression “see” the kingdom is not so common, so I start with the second one. What does it mean to “enter the kingdom of God”?

The closest Synoptic parallel to the saying, both in form and content, is the logion connected with the story of how Jesus blessed the children:

In truth I tell you, whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a child will never enter it (Mark 10:15; Matt 18:3; Luke 18:17).

The solemn introduction, the common topic of “entering” the kingdom and the similarity of the condition: “accepting like a child” or “being born again” indicate a probable dependence of the two logia, and most scholars see the Johannine version as a development of

¹⁰ Dalman, *Words of Jesus*, 135, n. 3. The expression “Sovereignty of God” is in the English version used as translation of the German “Gottesherrschaft” for the Greek βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ.

¹¹ I have developed the semantical question broader in H. Kvalbein: “The Kingdom of God in the Ethics of Jesus” *Communio Viatorum* 40 (1998) 197–227.

the Synoptic. However, the main difference should not be overlooked: the logical subject of "accepting like a child" is the person addressed, whereas the logical subject of the characteristic Johannine concept of "being born from above" is the Spirit (3:6.8) or God (1:13; 1 John 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1.4.18). John's version has another intention, but is closely related to the Synoptic saying and other sayings giving conditions for "entering" the kingdom.

The broadest argument for an abstract interpretation of the sayings on "entering" the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ has been given by Joel Marcus in his article "Entering into the Kingly Power of God."¹² He is right when he says that there is textual evidence that one may "enter into" an activity, so that the verb should not exclusively be connected to concrete, local concepts. But the verb is so strongly connected with the idea of movement that even "to enter" an action or an activity retains the connotation of a spatial movement of some kind. Ben Witherington has given a convincing refutation of Marcus' arguments that I shall not repeat here.¹³ The expression involves entering into some kind of realm related to God.

John D. Crossan has tried to define this realm in a non-apocalyptic or non-eschatological way. "The kingdom of God, in contemporary Jewish thought, could be just as much a present ethical as a future apocalyptic realm."¹⁴ Philo has texts pointing to God as king and to the Sage as participating in his kingship because of his virtues. The only occurrence of the expression βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ, the "kingship of God" is referring to its function as archetype for the Law according to which a true king should live and reign (The biblical text in question is Deut. 17:18–20).¹⁵ The linguistic expressions as well as the ideas in these texts are very different from the New

¹² Joel Marcus, "Entering into the Kingly Power of God," *JBL* 107 (1988) 663–675.

¹³ Witherington, *Jesus, Paul and the End*, 60–62. H. Merkley, *Die Gottesherrschaft als Handlungsprinzip: Untersuchung zur Ethik Jesu* (2nd ed.; Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1981) 118–120, argues for the translation "Gottesherrschaft" even in connection with verbs like "enter" and "inherit". In H. Merkley, *Jesu Botschaft von der Gottesherrschaft. Eine Skizze*, SBS 111 (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1983) 24, he maintains that the sayings where the βασιλεία denotes salvation itself belong to a later tradition and cannot be traced back to Jesus himself. Merkley has seen the problem, but his solutions are hardly convincing.

¹⁴ J. D. Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991) 287.

¹⁵ Crossan's reference on p. 289 to Philo *Spec. Leg.* 4.135–136 should be corrected to 4.164.

Testament sources. They do not help us in finding a plausible meaning of the phrase “enter the kingdom of God” in the Synoptic Gospels or in John. Crossan’s arguments for a “sapiental kingdom” and a “brokerless kingdom” from Philo and a few other Hellenistic-Jewish texts and from social conditions in the Mediterranean world are more creative than convincing. He compares these views with a small selection of texts from the hypothetical “oldest layers” of the Jesus-tradition, including sayings from the Gospel of Thomas. The saying on being like a child to enter the kingdom in Mark 10:15; Matt 18:3; Luke 18:17 and John 3:5 belongs to the first stratum, presumably with its form in the Gospel of Thomas 22 as closest to the original one. The reconstruction of a “sapiental kingdom” in this context is in conflict with the eschatological character of the majority of βασιλεία-sayings both in Paul and in the Synoptic Gospels.

The meaning of the phrase “enter the kingdom” in the Synoptic Gospels can be illuminated by a look at its paradigmatic relations or at its synonyms and antonyms. In the story of the rich man coming to Jesus (Mark 10,17–31) we find that the expression “enter the kingdom of God” (vv. 23–25) is used as a synonym of “inherit eternal life” (v. 17) and of “be saved” (v. 26). These expressions are the same in the parallel texts in Matthew and Luke, except that Matthew replaces “inherit” with “have” eternal life in the rich man’s question and varies the expression in Jesus answer with “enter life” (Matt 19:16,17). This dialogue in the Synoptic Gospels has clear similarities with the Nicodemus dialogue in John 3 in dealing with the great question of eternal life and in stressing that God himself is the only source of this gift. The birth from above describes what is impossible with men, but possible with God. It is therefore interesting that both of the two variations in Matthew may be seen as corresponding to or even as preparations for Johannine idioms. To “have” eternal life is his favourite expression for salvation found more than ten times between 3:15–16 and 20:31 (it also occurs in 1 John 3:15 and 5:11–13), and the expression “enter life” corresponds to the description of a believer as one who has “crossed over” from death to life (John 5:24; 1 John 3:14).

In a similar way we find that to “enter life” is a clear synonymous parallel to “enter the kingdom of God” in Mark 9:43–48:

If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off;
it is better for you to *enter life* maimed than with two hands go to hell,
to the unquenchable fire.

And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off;
it is better for you to *enter life* lame than with two feet to be thrown
into hell.

And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out;
it is better for you to *enter the kingdom of God* with one eye than with
two eyes to be thrown into hell, where their worm does not die, and
the fire is not quenched.

In this text we are also presented to an antonym to life or the kingdom of God: *gehenna*, "hell". The opposite possibility to "enter life or enter the kingdom" is to "go to hell," explained as a fire which is not quenched, or to "be thrown into hell." We note the different verbs used in these expressions. You "enter" the kingdom (or life), but you "are thrown" into hell like a guilty person who is "thrown" into prison (Matt 5:29 RSV: "put in jail"). The contrast to participation in the great meal of the kingdom can be expressed by the same verb: they shall "be thrown into the outer darkness," where they will weep and gnash their teeth (Matt 8:12). In this context the antonym to the kingdom is not hell and its fire, but the darkness outside the illuminated banquet hall. This imagery is found in many of the parables of Jesus.¹⁶

The phrase "enter the kingdom of God" is in the light of these texts referring to the eschatological salvation, conceived as a realm of joy, abundance and life, and contrasted to an area of darkness, grief and death.

This interpretation of the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ from its synonyms and antonyms makes it evident that the phrase in such contexts does not denote God's kingship or position as king. God as king is lord over both light and darkness, over life and death, over salvation and destruction.¹⁷ But the kingdom of God in the message of Jesus is only referring to light, life and salvation, and is clearly put in opposition to death, the darkness outside and the destruction.

In the Gospel of John "life" and "eternal life" has replaced the "kingdom of God" as the dominating expression for the gift of salvation. This terminology of John is no innovation, but is based in the Synoptic tradition and corresponds in its function to the Jewish

¹⁶ The man without wedding garment, Matt 22:13; the man not increasing his talent, Matt 25:30. The parables of the great banquet Luke 14:24 and of the Maidens Matt 25:10–11, both end up with a closed door separating those inside from those outside.

¹⁷ Deut 32:39; Isa 45:7; Matt 10:28.

term “life in the world to come”. It is therefore no surprise to find the dialogue with Nicodemus on “entrance requirements for the kingdom” followed up with a monologue where “eternal life” is the expression for the gift of “being saved” in contrast to perishing or being condemned, and where “light” is the symbol of the new life in contrast to “darkness” (John 3:10–21). Only Jesus as the heavenly Son of Man (v. 13) and the man from above (cf. 8:23) can give the birth from above allowing a human being to “enter the kingdom of God”. The Synoptic expression is here neatly embedded into characteristic Johannine terminology and theology, and there is no need to suppose any basic shift of meaning of the expression itself in its new context. It refers to the realm of salvation, life and light. John stresses the eternal life as a present gift, but does also confirm it as a future gift linked to judgement and resurrection (5:25–29; 11:24–25). According to his farewell speech Jesus will leave his disciples to prepare a place for them, and he shall come again and let them be with him (14:3). This is a close Johannine parallel to the expression “enter the kingdom of God”: it means to enter the place Jesus has prepared for his followers. The idea corresponds to the judgement scene in Matt 25, where the kingdom has been “prepared” for the sheep at the right hand of the Son of Man, the King on the heavenly throne (Matt 25:34). John has, however, no need to retain the apocalyptic imagery linked to these concepts in the Synoptic tradition.

3. “*Enter the Kingdom*” = “*Enter the Church?*”

Another non-eschatological interpretation of John 3:3 and 5 has been presented by Martin Hengel.¹⁸ After a penetrating analysis of the βασιλεία of Christ in John 18:36 he turns to the βασιλεία of God in the dialogue with Nicodemus and wants to put the two Johannine βασιλεία-sayings in close correspondence to each other. He acknowledges the provenance of the expression “enter the kingdom of God” from the Synoptic Jesus tradition as established terminology for participation in the future kingdom, but he finds a decisive change of

¹⁸ M. Hengel: “Reich Christi, Reich Gottes und Weltreich im Johannesevangelium,” *Königsherrschaft Gottes und himmlischer Kult im Judentum, Urchristentum und in der hellenistischen Welt*, ed. Martin Hengel and Anna Maria Schwemer (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1991) 163–184.

meaning of it in the Johannine context. In John it does not any more refer to the future joy of a heavenly kingdom, but to an event linked directly to the reception of the message of Jesus. The new birth of water and Spirit points to baptism as an act of faith, leading the person into the community of believers as the present βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ. To enter the kingdom means to enter the church. In this way Hengel can confirm the famous but defamed sentence from A. Loisy as a thoroughly Johannine idea: "Jesus announced the Kingdom, and the church came."¹⁹

I agree with Hengel that the "birth from above" refers to the present renewal of the believer in baptism. But I cannot follow his interpretation of "enter the kingdom of God" as referring to entering the church or the fellowship of believers. The identification of kingdom and church is late. It gained power only after Constantine by the influence of Augustin. In early patristic literature there are only some few texts in Hermas that might be pointing in this direction. In the other apostolic fathers, in the apologists of the second century and in Ireneus and Clement of Alexandria the overwhelming use of "kingdom of God" or similar expressions is futuristic and eschatological.²⁰ The prayer of Didache from the beginning of the 2nd century makes a beautiful distinction between the church as God's scattered people on earth and the kingdom of God as the future realm of salvation:

Remember, Lord, your church to deliver her from all evil and to perfect her in your love, and to gather her from the four winds when she has been sanctified into your kingdom which has been prepared for her. Yours is the power and glory for ever. May grace come and this world pass away" (Did 10:5f.).

This distinction from Didache between the church as the people of God and the kingdom of God as their home and their eschatological "promised land" is in fact applicable to most Synoptic passages on the kingdom as well as to the dialogue with Nicodemus in John 3. In this dialogue the church does not correspond to the kingdom, but to the persons who are born from above by water and spirit and live under the promise of "seeing" or "entering" the kingdom. The church is present in the text as the "we" speaking in 3:11 in confrontation with those who do not receive their testimony. The

¹⁹ Hengel, "Reich Christi," 179.

²⁰ Everett Ferguson, "The Kingdom of God in Early Patristic Literature," *The Kingdom of God in 20th Century Interpretation*, ed. W. Willis (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1987) 191–208.

author includes himself in this “we” in the dialogue with Nicodemus (as he does in the “we” in 1:14; 19:35 cf. 21:24). Nicodemus on the other hand represents the Jews (v. 10: “you are a teacher of the Jews”) that again represent the *kosmos*. The author invites Nicodemus/the Jews/the world to listen to the voice of the Spirit and believe in God’s beloved Son, whom God *sent* to the world (17) and *gave* for the world (16) in *love* for the world (16) in order to *save* the world (17). The accumulation of positive expressions for God’s saving action for the *kosmos* in these verses is striking. But God’s universal love cannot prevent the separation of those who “loved the darkness more than the light” from those who “do the truth and come to the light” (19–21). The idea of the church as the people of the kingdom is indeed present in the chapter, but should not be identified with the idea of the kingdom itself.

Basically the concept of the church as ἐκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ with its sociological connotations is clearly distinguished from the eschatological concept of God’s kingdom in the first two centuries. Paul can write letters to the churches in Corinth, Philippi and Rome. But he cannot write letters to the kingdom of God, neither in these cities nor elsewhere. This kind of distinction should not be extinguished when we read the “kingdom”-sayings in John 3:1–8. The text presupposes the church as a body of believers or disciples practising baptism and inviting to the new life from above. But they are not the kingdom, and they have not yet “entered” the kingdom in the full, eschatological sense of the phrase.

4. “*See the Kingdom of God*” (John 3:3)

Apart from his interpretation of John 18:36, to which I return later, Hengel argues for an identification of kingdom and church from the parallel expression in 3:3, “*see the Kingdom of God*”. In Hengel’s view this does not refer to a future experience of heavenly joy, but to an experience immediately linked to the hearing of the gospel in faith. Hengel points to the similar use of the verb “see” in 3:36: “Whoever rejects the Son will not see life” and in 11:40: “If you believed, you would see the glory of God.” To be “born from above” corresponds to Paul’s description of the Christian as a “new creature” already now in 2 Cor 5:17.²¹

²¹ Hengel, “Reich Christi” 178.

The parallel expression of “seeing” the kingdom is, however, no decisive argument against an eschatological understanding of “entering” the kingdom. “See” is in biblical language used for experiencing in a broad sense. In 3:36 John uses “see eternal life” as a synonym to “have eternal life”, and both expressions can be taken as the characteristic Johannine terms corresponding to “seeing” and “entering” the kingdom of God in 3:3.5. The two other NT occurrences of the verb “see” with the kingdom as object refer to the future kingdom, even if the Lucan parallel may have weakened the reference to the consummation itself (Mark 9:1; Luke 9:27). Paul makes a distinction between our life in faith now and the possibility of “seeing” beyond death or in the coming world (2 Cor 5:7, cf. 4:18; 1 Cor 13:12; Rom 8:24f.), and even if John already has “seen” the glory of Christ (1:14) as have also Abraham (8:56) and Isaiah (12:41), he knows about a faith not based on vision, but on hearing (20:29). In the school of John, 1 John 3:2 presents a future way of “seeing” that implies a full eschatological change: “When Christ appears, we shall become like him, because we shall see him as he really is.” This vision corresponds to the prayer of Jesus that the disciples may be with him and see his glory (17:24). To be “with him” in this context points to the fellowship with him beyond death indicated in 12:25–26 and in 14:2–3.

The closest parallel to “see the kingdom of God” in Jewish literature is the description of the eschatological renewal in 2. Bar 51:8: “For they shall see that world which is now invisible to them, and they will see a time which is now hidden to them.”²² The idea of a heavenly world which is invisible until the coming age is similar to the Johannine dualism, where the expectation of a coming fulfilment is not abandoned even if the tension between above and below or

²² The interpretation of Jacob’s dream in Wis 10:10 is probably not in the same way guided by a sense of the two ages, but by a dualistic tension of body and spirit (cf. 9:14–18). When God’s wisdom “showed him the kingdom of God (βασιλείαν θεοῦ) and taught him the knowledge of holy things,” this is hardly a vision of the world to come, but a vision of the heavenly world “above”. The parallelism of βασιλεία and ἁγία indicates that the vision was of the heavenly sanctuary or the heavenly realm of God more than of God himself as king (Is 6:1, 5), so that the translation “kingdom” rather than “kingship” in the Jerusalem Bible is well founded. (pace the translation “royauté”, kingship, in the French TOB: Traduction Oecuménique de la Bible, Cerf 1988).

between spirit and flesh has become the more dominating.²³ To “see” the invisible belongs to the eschatological future.

My conclusion is that the expressions in John 3:3–5 on “seeing” and “entering” the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ, are not only remnants of a traditional Synoptic vocabulary. They are used as referents to a eschatological salvation in the dialogue with Nicodemus as a Jewish leader. There is no need to suppose a basic change of the meaning in John compared to the Synoptic Gospels, even if his accent may have been moved from the vertical dualism of the two ages in the Synoptic Gospels and in Judaism to the horizontal dualism of below and above in Hellenism.²⁴ John is not concerned about the traditional imagery linked to the biblical eschatology, and has replaced the “kingdom of God” with “eternal life” as the dominating expression for being “saved”. These three concepts are synonomous in John 3:1–21 as well as in Mark 10:17–31 with parallels.

5. *The Kingship of Christ in John 18:36*

The second occurrence of the word βασιλεία in John is in the examination of Jesus by Pilate. NIV renders the answer of Jesus in 18:36 as follows:

My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place.

Hengel’s article gives an excellent exposition of this saying as part of the tensions between the Early Church, Judaism and Roman authorities at the end of the first century. The dialogical scenes between Pilate and Jesus and between Pilate and the Jewish leaders 18:28–19:19,²⁵ serve an apologetic as well as a christological function. It

²³ G. E. Ladd, *Theology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974) 223–236: “The Johannine Dualism”.

²⁴ R. Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John* (Tunbridge Wells: Burns & Oates 1968) 1.366–7 on John 3:3: “. . . here the kingdom of God, in the Johannine perspective, should rather be considered as the heavenly realm on high to which the divine envoy leads (cf. 14:3; 12:26; 17:24).”

²⁵ R. E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah* (2 vols.; New York: Doubleday, 1993) 1.758, divides this section in seven episodes arranged in a chiastic structure. Pilate talks to Jesus “inside” and to the Jews “outside” the praetorium. Basically the same structure is given by Schnackenburg, *John* 3:220.

shows a Jesus who is no political challenge to the Roman Empire. The message and the methods of Jesus were not at all comparable with the Zealots in the years leading up to the first Jewish war AD 66–70. Their messianic expectations and political aspirations were not dead at the time of John's gospel. They created new unrest in the Bar Kochba revolt or the second war AD 132–135. In the Johannine trial scene Jesus is a quite different "king of the Jews". He had no intentions of undermining the Roman authorities. But the text also portrays him as a king of truth who is superior both to the pragmatic Pilate and to the persecuting Jews.

Hengel points out the close relationship between the two occurrences of βασιλεία in John 3 and 18. The word is used both times in a dialogue between Jesus and a person of authority, Nicodemus as "leader of the Jews" and Pilate as the Roman prefect. Both of them speak to Jesus with respect and good intentions, but are not able to understand his answer. The climax is no doubt the confrontation with the Roman power.²⁶ Hengel interprets the kingdom of Christ in 18:36 as a synonym to the kingdom of God in 3:3–5 and sees this as a part of a development in the Early Church: to replace the message of the kingdom of God with a message of the kingdom of Christ.²⁷

But one should not overlook the differences between the two expressions and the two text units they are part of. The central theme of the Roman trial of Jesus 18:33–19:22 is the kingship of Jesus. The crucial question is posed in 18:33: "Are you the king of the Jews?" The title βασιλεύς is applied to Jesus 12 times in this section, which is concluded by the public proclamation in three languages on the *titulus* on the cross: JESUS OF NAZARETH, KING OF THE JEWS.²⁸ In all the four Gospels the title "king of the Jews" is the public inscription, John alone gives the name of the crucified one. This corresponds with their picture of the Roman trial, where the basic question is the same: "are you the king of the Jews?" (Mark 15:2; Matt 27:11; Luke 23:3). But only John has elaborated this scene to include a dialogue on the character of Jesus' kingship (18:34–38), a dialogue on the authority of Pilate (19:8–11) and a dramatic

²⁶ Hengel, "Reich Christi" 178.

²⁷ Hengel, "Reich Christi" 177.

²⁸ Hengel, "Reich Christi" 165.

confrontation where the Jews at the end reject their own king and prefer the Emperor in Rome (19:4–7, 12–15).

This is indeed a very different context for the use of the word βασιλεία. In the dialogue with Nicodemus in 3:1–21 there is no discussion of the kingship of Jesus at all. The question is how you can enter the kingdom of God, followed by a discussion of how it can be possible to “have eternal life”.

This quite different context in John 18–19 should direct our reading of the word βασιλεία in the saying of Jesus in 18:36. The word simply has another meaning and another referent than in 3:3–5. It should be understood and translated according to the first lexical meaning: kingship, royal rule, authority or position as king. It is misleading to interpret it as referring to the “kingdom of God” in 3:3–5 or in the Synoptic Gospels. The translation in the RSV is no doubt better than the AV or NIV that I have quoted above:

My kingship is not of this world; if my kingship were of this world, my servants would fight, that I might not be handed over to the Jews; but my kingship is not from the world (John 18:36 RSV).

Neither in John nor in the Synoptic Gospels we can find traces of the question “who is king?” referring to God. The question of God’s kingship is not raised, neither in the message of Jesus nor in redactional commentaries. Only in some very few texts God is described as king, partly in the description of Jerusalem as the “city of the great king” (Matt 5:35), partly in a couple of parables where “the king” is probably a metaphor for God (Matt 18:23; 22:1–13). This is traditional language, limited to the Gospel of Matthew with its close relationship to Jewish-Christian traditions. The dominating metaphor when Jesus talks about God is “father,” not “king.”²⁹ The absence of this topic and this metaphor is hard to explain if the central phrase of the message of Jesus, βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ, is a subjective genitive denoting God’s rule or activity as king. God’s position as king is probably presupposed in the teaching of Jesus as part of the Scripture, but it is not explicitly addressed and plays no central role in any of the gospels.

²⁹ B. Witherington 1990 (n. 7), 216–221, Peter Stuhlmacher, *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, vol. 1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992) 84–88 (literature).

The position of *Jesus* as king, however, is a burning question in all the gospels. It is an aspect of the question of Jesus as the Messiah, the promised Son of David. In all the gospels Jesus was hailed as king or as Son of David when he entered Jerusalem on the ass. Both in Matthew (21:4) and in John (12:14–16) this is marked out by the insertion of a redactional reference to Zech 9:9: “Do not be afraid, O Daughter of Zion; see, your king is coming . . .” In addition to this, John (12:13) adds the expression ὁ βασιλεὺς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ to the salutation with the blessing from Ps 118:25–26: from the great crowd “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, Blessed is the King of Israel!”

The kingship of Jesus is no secret in John as it is in Mark, and Peter is not the first disciple to confess him as Messiah at the turning point of his ministry in Caesarea Philippi, as in the Synoptic Gospels. Already in the very beginning of the gospel of John, when the first disciples were called, it is Andrew, Peter’s brother who informs him: “We have found the Messiah” (1:41), and Nathanel follows up the honorable status ascribed to him as a “true Israelite” with the solemn confession: “Rabbi, you are the Son of God, you are the King of Israel” (1:47–49). In this way John proclaims Jesus’ position as king from the very beginning, and the question of his kingship is kept warm throughout his story in a much more explicit and prominent way than in the Synoptic Gospels. In the great dialogue with the Samaritan woman her apprehension of him as the Messiah leads many Samaritans to the belief that he is “in truth the Saviour of the world” (4:25f. 29. 42). After Jesus had fed the large crowd with five barley loaves and two fishes, John tells that Jesus withdrew from them because they would “come and make him king by force” (6:15). Here the kingship of Jesus is explicitly seen as a problem: He is the king of Israel, but he does not want to be a king according to the expectations of the people.

In the story of John these texts have prepared the way for Pilate’s question in the praetorium. Jesus answer is therefore not related to the question of “entering the kingdom of God” in 3:3–5. It is related to the character of his own kingship. The solemn, almost awkward form of his answer repeats three times that his βασιλεία is “not of this world.” The expression corresponds closely to the double assertion in the prayer of Jesus 17:14–16: “They are not of the world even as I am not of the world.” The disciples have been elected out of this world, and therefore they shall experience persecution from

the world and be hated (cf. 15:18–20). This does not mean that they are taken out of the world. They are sent to the world like Jesus himself. His ministry as king is to “testify to the truth” and to gather those who belong to the truth (18:37). This definition of his kingship illuminates his prayer for his disciples in 17:17: “sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth”. In Johannine terminology this prayer could more adequately be described as the royal prayer by the king of truth than as the sacerdotal or high priestly prayer.³⁰ The description of his kingship as not being of this world and as a testimony to the truth, also corresponds to his controversy with the Jews in Chapter 8: “You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world.” Some verses later this declaration is followed up with a word on the decisive role of the truth: “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (8:23.31f.). We see that the concept of truth is closely linked to the concept of discipleship as well as to his own kingship.

As king of the truth Jesus really has servants (18:36), but they are not called to prevent his arrest by the Jews. This special kind of kingship is vividly described in John’s story of the arrest of Jesus 18:1–11. The soldiers drew back and fell to the ground at his answer “I am he.” John has no indication that the disciples fled. Jesus, who explicitly is presented as “knowing all that was going to happen” is in complete control of the situation. He orders the soldiers to let his disciples go, so that his own words should be fulfilled: “I have lost none of those you gave me” (cf. 6:39). Peter is rebuked for cutting off the right ear of the High Priest’s servant: “Put your sword into its sheath; shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?” Here, as in 12:27–29, we hear an echo of the Synoptic story of the agony in Gethsemane, which is not part of John’s story. Jesus does not need that kind of servants and does not want to be defended with swords. Jesus goes voluntarily and in full freedom to his death. Neither his own disciples nor Pilate are allowed to stop him. He has to fulfil his mission and to drink the cup his Father has given him, until his

³⁰ The title given to John 17 in *Synopsis Quattuor Evangeliorum* ed. Kurt Aland (Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1967) is “Das hochpriesterliche Gebet” and its Latin and English equivalents, “Oratio Sacerdotalis,” and “The Intercessory Prayer.”

victorious word when he died on the cross: τετέλεσται, “it is finished” (19:30).

The kingship of Jesus is really different from what you expect from a king. This is a common topic in all the gospels, but is elaborated in a unique way in the Gospel of John. In the Book of Revelation he is even presented as the lord of lords and the king of kings (Rev 17:14; 19:16). From this it is no surprise that the functional meaning (kingship, kingly power, rule) is dominating in some word connections speaking of the βασιλεία of *Jesus*.³¹ In some texts, however, also the βασιλεία of Jesus refers to the realm of salvation, like the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ. This corresponds to a development in the Early Church, where the βασιλεία of Jesus and the βασιλεία of God were not distinguished from one another and became identical.³² In my view this development does not undermine, but confirms that the phrase βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ in Jesus’ message had a concrete and local meaning from the beginning.³³

When we read the gospels, however, we should not confuse the two concepts of the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ as referring to the realm of God’s salvation and the βασιλεία of Jesus as referring to his position as king, neither in the Synoptic Gospels nor in John.³⁴ A closer look at the relationship of these concepts to each other is beyond the scope of this article. To say that Jesus is the king “in the kingdom of God” would be an oversimplification. But one conclusion has emerged from our considerations: when we look at the centrality of the presentation of Jesus as king in the Gospels and compare it with the absence of topics related to God as king or the kingship of God, the concrete meaning of the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ should not be doubted. At this point our dictionaries need a revision.

³¹ Matt 16:28 Luke 1:33; 22:29; 1 Cor 15:24; Heb 1:8.

³² Eph 5:6; Col 1:13; 2 Tim 4:1.18; 2 Pet 1:11. In these texts βασιλεία evidently has a concrete, spatial meaning and refers to the realm of salvation.

³³ Pace Merklein, *Jesu Botschaft*, 24.

³⁴ See the wise comments on John 18:36 in Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 3: 249: “Jesus’ βασιλεία does not here signify his ‘kingdom’ but, in accordance with Pilate’s question it is a designation of a function (‘kingship’). Thus, Jesus’ βασιλεία is not the heavenly realm like the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ in 3:3,5 . . . it is not at all permissible to forge a link between the answer to Pilate and Jesus’ Kingdom of God preaching.”

JOHN'S QUEST FOR JESUS

D. Moody Smith

1. *The Gospel: Finding Jesus in the Present*

The Quest of the Historical Jesus was the title given to the English translation of Albert Schweitzer's great book *Von Reimarus zu Wrede*.¹ It has become the name of the search for the real (i.e. historical) Jesus in modern NT scholarship. We thus have the Old Quest, the New Quest, and the Third Quest. All are products of modernity (if not post-modernity) and have no parallel in antiquity, or so we historians and exegetes think. There was in antiquity no "disinterested" quest for Jesus. But we have learned recently—if we did not already know—that no quest was ever "disinterested."² There are various interests, some more appropriate than others.

Today, as in antiquity, Jesus has found people. He has found George W. Bush, Jane Fonda, and my sister-in-law, among others—and not least Schweitzer himself ("He comes to us as one unknown, as of old, by the lakeside, he came to those men who did not know who he was. He says the same word: 'Follow thou me.'"). In antiquity he found, first of all (or "last of all") Paul of Tarsus. There is a sense in which the priority always lies, or lay, with Jesus. "You did not choose me but I chose you," says Jesus in John (15:16). Yet this does not mean people do not—did not—also seek Jesus (John 1:38–39). John Painter has written an important book about the quest motif and quest stories in the Gospel of John.³ Jesus seeks and

¹ As noted by Dennis Nineham in his "Forward to the Complete Edition" of Schweitzer's *Quest of the Historical Jesus*, ed. John Bowman (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001), 488 n. 6. This significant new publication includes for the first time in English translation Schweitzer's own additions in his second edition (1913), entitled *Geschichte der Leben-Jesu-Forschung*, as well as revisions of W. Montgomery's translation (1912). I have used this revision of Schweitzer's last paragraph, with a few alterations as I have consulted the original German text.

² On this important point note the work of Leander E. Keck, *Who Is Jesus? History in Perfect Tense*, Studies on Personalities of the New Testament (Columbia: University of South Carolina, 2000) esp. 2–7.

³ John Painter, *The Quest for the Messiah: The History, Literature, and Theology of the Johannine Community* (2d ed.; Nashville: Abingdon, 1993).

finds people, but they also quest for him. This is a theological motif, but it also has a historical basis, one that may be quite ancient.

The very production of Gospels bespeaks an interest in who Jesus was, that is, in a quest. I think this is true of Matthew and even Mark, although they do not express it. In Matthew, of course, Jesus is Emmanuel, "God with us" (1:23), and he promises to stay with his disciples to the end of the age (28:20). But because he is who he is, and will be who he will be, who he *was* is important, both theologically and historically. If Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Heb 13:8), who he was is an essential part of who he is. We (exegetes and historians) may agree that in the Gospels there was an uncritical merging of Jesus *was-ness* with his *is-ness*, but this does not necessarily mean who Jesus was had been forgotten or deemed of no importance. When Paul speaks of Jesus' having been rich, and for our sakes becoming poor (2 Cor 8:9), or of his humbling himself and becoming obedient to death (Phil 2:8) does he not reflect knowledge of who Jesus was and what his ministry was like?

I just said "even Mark" bespeaks such an historical interest. The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ the Son of God (Mark 1:1) may be John the Baptizer, or it could be Jesus himself. In any event, the fact that Mark tells this story—what becomes the basic narrative—of Jesus' ministry must be of fundamental importance for understanding what Mark is about. The beginning of the good news is this story. Or the beginning is John the Baptizer whose activity is the first episode of this story of Jesus' ministry.

When we turn to the presumably later Gospels of Luke and John, the historical interest becomes explicit. Luke tells us several important things in his brief preface (1:1–4): First, he has had predecessors, and is not the first to write such a narrative. (We know Mark, but were there others?). Second, he himself was not an eyewitness. Third, he has conducted a thorough investigation. Fourth, and finally, this historical narrative will apparently confirm the Christian instruction that Theophilus, has received. Luke actually reinforces the view, now long held by Christians, that the historical truth of the narrative is somehow basic to its theological truth. What is implicit in Mark's and Matthew's undertaking to write a Gospel now becomes explicit. Indeed, what here becomes explicit is already implicit in Paul's "He died for our sins according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor 15:3). Something happened that naturally evokes a narrative.

When one turns to the Gospel of John, the same interest appears,

if in different form. In the prologue John writes, "We have beheld his glory" (1:14), and for John the glory of Jesus is already present to the eyes of his followers in his historic ministry (cf. 2:11), even though they cannot comprehend it. Beyond that, as in Luke, the historical dimension is attested by the work or position of the author. The disciple whom Jesus loved is the one "who is testifying to these things" (or "who bears witness concerning these things") and "who has written these things" (or "who has caused these things to be written"). He represents, and testifies to, a community: "We know that his witness is true" (21:24). The Gospel then concludes with the author's, or narrator's, concession that this Gospel does not contain everything Jesus did and his rumination about how much space it would take to hold the books that would be filled if a complete account of Jesus' ministry were given (21:25). The same witness also appears earlier at the foot of the cross, to attest the piercing of Jesus' side and the efflux of water and blood (19:35). The historical interest of Luke thus finds its counterpart in John.

Both these later Gospels make this interest, and its theological importance, quite obvious. There is, nevertheless, a major difference: Luke, although confident of the accuracy of his narrative, makes clear that he himself was not an eyewitness, but rather dependent on their testimony. The Gospel of John, on the other hand, claims to be based on the eyewitness of one person in particular, the disciple whom Jesus loved: John, according to later tradition. (The Gospel itself never names this disciple; he remains anonymous.) No Gospel makes as strong or as specific a claim. Ironically, Luke, who is one or two steps removed from the eyewitness generation seems to most of us much closer to the historical figure of Jesus than the Fourth Gospel. I think that is actually the case. Jesus proclaimed God's will for human beings, spoke of the advent of the kingdom of God, taught in parables, healed the sick, cast out demons, debated with scribes and Pharisees about matters other than his role and dignity. This characterization agrees with Mark and Matthew, but not so much with John, whose portrayal of Jesus and his ministry, while embracing the broad outlines of the Markan narrative, is different in many respects, large and small. In John Jesus talks about himself: he talks Christology.

But even as John assures the reader of the sufficiency of the Gospel's witness, a different concern comes into view: not how the church can reach the Jesus of the past, but how the Jesus of the past,

and future, is, or can be, present to the church. The Fourth Evangelist ("John" for convenience's sake) surely believes Jesus is present to his church. I do not think that he believes Jesus can be produced by literary or theological sleight of hand. Still, John has a purpose and a project: to show how, despite the doubts and apprehension of his disciples, Jesus intended and accomplished his purpose of returning to his disciples after his death and departure from them.

Unlike Luke, John does not write a narrative about Jesus followed by a narrative of the church. His narrative ends with the resurrection, and also the ascension of Jesus, which coincides with his resurrection rather than following it (or concluding it) as in Luke. John's narrative, while it is about Jesus, also portrays the historical situation of his own church, which is opposed by some Jews, particularly Pharisees, who reject the claims made for Jesus. Let me give the example made famous by J. Louis Martyn.⁴

In John's depiction of the giving of sight to the man born blind (chap. 9), the Jews and Pharisees are named interchangeably as the opponents of Jesus, and particularly of the healed man, who insists on the reality of what Jesus had done for him. Meanwhile, his parents decline to answer the crucial question of the Jews for fear of being put out of the Synagogue as followers of the Christ (9:22; "the Jews" have agreed to put Christ-confessors out of the Synagogue). Martyn has convincingly argued that a piece of old Jesus' tradition, which tells of his healing of a blind man, has been developed in terms of the controversies of John's own day. Jewish opponents of the Johannine church are in effect excommunicating other Jews who believe that Jesus is the Messiah of Jewish and biblical expectation. The opponents of Jesus merge with the church's opponents, and even the figure of Jesus merges with that of the early Christian preachers. Thus Martyn speaks of two levels in the Gospel of John, that of the old tradition, putatively Jesus, and that of the Johannine church. Whether or not John has analyzed these two levels as we do, he obviously believes that the two levels of conflict and struggle are fundamentally the same. Thus rather than telling the story of Jesus and then the story of the church, as Luke does, John imposes the one upon the other. We might say that in doing so John distorts

⁴ J. Louis Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (rev. ed.; Nashville: Abingdon, 1979) esp. 24–36.

history. If he were to think in these terms, John might, contrariwise, insist that instead history is clarified, because the two levels are two (historical) stages of the same struggle.

John does not believe that Jesus' presence in the conflicts of his followers is something he himself has accomplished simply by his literary or theological cleverness. It is a real state of affairs corresponding to the church's post-resurrection experience. Of course, prior to Jesus' death, ascension, and resurrection, the disciples could scarcely know what was in store for them, despite the fact that in the farewell discourses Jesus had already told them.

In fact, a principal question of the discourses is raised by Jesus' telling his disciples, in response to Peter's question ("Lord, where are you going?"), that he is going where Peter cannot follow until "afterward"—that is, after Jesus' own death and resurrection (13:36). But this language is enigmatic to Peter, as it will be to the disciples throughout the discourses, even when they think they understand (16:29–32). Jesus' initial statements then deal with the question of how the disciples will continue in Jesus' dwelling place with the Father (14:1–4). Not surprisingly, these words are perennial favorites at Christian funeral services, and with some reason, but they actually introduce a basic theme of the farewell discourses: Jesus' continuing presence with the disciples. Thomas plays a key role in evincing the disciples' ignorance (14:5): "How can we know the way?"⁵ Jesus then makes his famous response, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (14:6). We may read this and assume there were many ways to God the Father, and Jesus has closed the others off. Jesus and John's hearers would have assumed there was no way except the one opened by Jesus. Jesus then continues by assuring the disciples that they know the Father through knowing him, Jesus (v. 7), but their perplexity continues (vss. 8–14) as Philip asks, "Show us the Father. . . ." So Jesus eventually issues the first promise of the (another) Paraclete, translated Advocate (NRSV) or Counselor (RSV), the Spirit of truth (14:15–17).

⁵ On the positive role of Thomas in the Gospel of John, see James H. Charlesworth, *The Beloved Disciple: Whose Witness Validates the Gospel of John?* (Valley Forge: Trinity Press International, 1995). In arguing that Thomas is the Beloved Disciple, he rightly emphasizes the important, and even positive, role Thomas plays in the narrative (see esp. 225–87). He also presents a valuable history of the discussion of the problem, indicating the various proposals about his identity (127–224).

Only the Gospel of John calls the Spirit of truth or Holy Spirit (14:26) the Advocate or Counselor. The Greek word is *παράκλητος* (English transliteration: Paraclete), which can be translated either way. "Lawyer" is also a possible meaning. The lawyer pleads for his client ("Advocate") or counsels his client ("Counselor"). In 1 John 2:1 Jesus himself is called our Advocate (Paraclete) with the Father. That application to Jesus is apparently in view when Jesus speaks of another Advocate, that is, the Spirit of truth. In view of the Spirit-Paraclete's actual function according to the Gospel, "Counselor" seems to me the better translation.⁶ The Spirit of truth or Holy Spirit counsels the disciples. Indeed the Spirit-Paraclete is the form of Jesus' presence with them. He speaks for Jesus and to the church.

After promising the Spirit-Paraclete,⁷ Jesus reverts to more widely known, traditional eschatological forms of speech: "I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me. . . ." (vss. 18, 19). Soon thereafter Judas, not Iscariot, asks Jesus how he will reveal himself to the disciples and not to the world (vs. 22). Judas' question recognizes that traditional eschatological expectation is being revised. Jesus' coming is not to be a public event. Jesus' presence with his disciples is somehow contingent on their keeping his commandments (vs. 21), his words (vs. 24), but there is more to it than that. Once again Jesus speaks of the Paraclete, now identified as the Holy Spirit, who will be the means of Jesus' active presence in the community of his disciples, teaching them "all things" and reminding them of what Jesus has said (14:25-26).

One thinks back to 2:22, after Jesus' word about his resurrection that concludes John's temple cleansing scene: "When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken" (John 2:22). Also the conclusion of the triumphal entry scene (12:12-19), with its citation of Ps 18:25-26 and Zech 9:9: "His dis-

⁶ The NRSV shows a tendency to strive for consistency in translation. Thus "Advocate" is used to translate *παράκλητος* in 1 John 2:1 and in the farewell discourses of the Gospel. But in the Gospel "Counselor" seems a better translation, because it embraces the juridical aspect of the term as well as the obvious function of the Paraclete in conveying the reality of Jesus to the disciples.

⁷ As far as I know, the apt term was introduced to prominence by George Johnston, *The Spirit-Paraclete in the Gospel of John*, SNTSMS, 12 (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1970) 29-39.

ciples did not understand this at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that this had been written of him and had been done to him" (John 12:16). Moreover, after Jesus' mysterious saying about thirsting and drinking (7:37–38), the evangelist comments: "Now this he said about the Spirit, which those who believed in him were to receive; for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (John 7:39). What is now being said in the concluding discourses has been anticipated during Jesus' public ministry. But later on, the disciples' continuing anxiety over Jesus' departure is reflected in Jesus' reassuring word: "Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you" (John 16:7).

With Jesus' departure the disciples will be closer to, not farther from, Jesus, but they cannot yet appreciate this fact. Yet the importance of the advent of the Spirit Paraclete cannot be overstated. The Paraclete, the Spirit of truth, has a continuing revelatory, as well as a reminding and reassuring, function: "... he will guide you into all truth" (16:13). Obviously, he will tell the church things Jesus has not yet told the disciples: "... you cannot bear them now" (16:12). But these new things will not be discontinuous with Jesus: "... he will take what is mine and declare it to you" (vs. 14). Nevertheless, there will be further words of Jesus, which he did not utter during his historic ministry, but which will be delivered to the church through the Spirit.

When one reflects on it, this is an astounding assertion and claim. With good reason one asks how much of the Gospel of John itself is a fulfillment of this promise. What we have been reading here corresponds to the character of the Gospel of John, particularly the words ascribed to Jesus. As far as we can tell through comparison with the Synoptics, there are numerous words of Jesus in John that go back to old tradition, if not Jesus himself (e.g., 12:25–26; cf. Mark 8:34–35 *et par.* Matt 16:34 and Luke 17:33). (In many cases, however, these sayings do not seem to be derived directly from the Synoptics, although scholarly opinions differ.) On the other hand, much of what is ascribed to Jesus is unparalleled in the Synoptics, or any other Gospel we know. Moreover, most of these words, including the farewell discourses themselves, speak directly to the situation and needs of the Johannine church in the post-resurrection period. In the long run Christians generally have found in these words Jesus'

direct address to themselves. To a large extent the words of the Johannine Jesus are Spirit-inspired words, and are to be taken seriously as such. They are misconstrued if taken as self-consciously conceived means of expressing the evangelist's theology. They deserve to be taken at face value as words of the exalted Christ speaking through the Spirit.⁸

As Martyn maintained, the Spirit-Paraclete is the key to the two levels of John's witness, the once-upon-a-time (*einmalig*) and the level of the Johannine church.⁹ The Paraclete brings the two together and is the mode or means of Jesus' speaking to the church. The Paraclete warrants the claim within the church that its situation and that of Jesus are fundamentally the same. Therefore, words of Jesus spoken to his situation may now be directed to the church, and new words of Jesus may be, and are, forthcoming as new situations arise: "He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you" (16:14). What the Spirit declares in the name of Jesus there is the revelation of God to the church: "All that the Father has in mine. For this reason I said he will take what is mine and declare it to you" (16:15). So through the Fourth Evangelist and under the aegis of the Spirit, Jesus continues to speak. As Schweitzer concludes:

He says the same words, "Follow thou me!", and sets us to the tasks which he must fulfill in our time. He commands, and to those who obey him, whether wise or simple, he will reveal himself in the tranquility, the toils, the conflicts, which they will live through in his fellowship, and as an inexpressible mystery they will experience who he is.

⁸ This proposal is by no means new. See my own *The Theology of the Gospel of John* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1995) 139–44. There I cite works that have been seminal for me: M. E. Boring, "The Influence of Christian Prophecy on the Johannine Portrait of the Paraclete and Jesus," *NTS* 25 (1978–79) 113–23; D. Bruce Woll, *Johannine Christianity in Conflict: Authority, Rank, and Succession in the First Farewell Discourse* (SBLDS 60; Chico: Scholars Press, 1981) 109–28; David E. Aune, "The Odes of Solomon and Early Christian Prophecy," *NTS* 28 (1982) 435–60. Earlier on I had made such a suggestion in "Johannine Christianity: Some Reflections on Its Character and Delineation," *NTS* 21 (1976) 222–48; note esp. 232–3 and 243–4. Of course, in Ernst Käsemann's famous monograph, *The Testament of Jesus: A Study of the Gospel of John in the Light of Chapter 17*, trans. G. Krodel (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1968), one finds a Gospel that is not only sectarian, incipiently docetic, and fundamentally dogmatic, but also charismatic (esp. 36–8, 45–7), originating in Christian prophecy (38) and subject to the vagaries of Spirit inspiration (47). The dogma of Christ as the Word and the insistence upon following him alone, however, controls the Johannine proclamation.

⁹ Martyn, *History and Theology* 143–51, esp. 145–46.

Ironically perhaps, the same Albert Schweitzer who dismisses the Gospel of John as a historical source, here sounds quite Johannine. Perhaps it is not irony, but rather that Schweitzer, like the Fourth Evangelist, has heard Jesus speaking. No wonder then that in these almost poetic lines he falls into a rhythmic cadence, a Johannine mode of speech!

We see here the establishment of a Spiritual authority, but one that does not actualize itself in the community apart from Jesus, who in his own historical moment has been seen and heard. Jesus is the basis and criterion. Yet such spiritual authority already implies a charismatic office or prophetic ministry in the church. When we turn to the Apocalypse and the Johannine Letters we can see something of its effect.

2. *The Epistles: Finding Jesus in the Past*

When we compare the Gospel with the Epistles, there are, as interpreters have long observed, many similarities, not only in vocabulary and style, but in specifically theological language. They come from the same theological and presumably ecclesiastical circles, if not from the same author.¹⁰ True, the First Epistle lacks the same theological depth, and sharpness, that we find in the Gospel. It is sometimes perplexing, and one wonders whether the author himself was perplexed. Or, as some have seriously suggested, perhaps he had grown old and somewhat less articulate!

However that may be, and we shall not attempt to decide the question of authorship, there is a common theological ground (*Mütterboden*) on which Gospel and Epistles are based. They come from the same school or circle of churches.¹¹ Yet there are differences.

¹⁰ Thus Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, trans. Kendrick Grobel (2 vols.; New York: Scribner's, 1951-55) 2.3-92, treats them together: "Whether the Epistles were written by the author of the Gospel himself or simply came out of his 'school' can here be disregarded" (3). For a good discussion of questions regarding common authorship and tradition, see Raymond E. Brown, *The Epistles of John* (AB, 30; Garden City: Doubleday, 1982) 14-35. He concludes: "... I think it very likely but not certain that 1 John was written by one other than the evangelist" (35).

¹¹ As Bultmann already acknowledged (above, n. 10). Brown, *Epistles of John*, esp. 94-97, distinguishes the Johannine school, as the tradition bearers, from the Johannine community generally.

For one thing, the setting or situation is apparently different. The Jewish opponents of Jesus—probably also the opponents of the Johannine church—have disappeared. That is, the opponents are not—I would say no longer—“the Jews,” but heretical Christians, whose confession or theology is not only inadequate but dangerous. Their heresy has to do with their view of Jesus, and this in turn is related to the somewhat different perspective on Jesus in the Epistles, particularly 1 John, as compared with that of the Gospel. In the Gospel the presence of Jesus to the church is an urgent need and, for the evangelist, a reality. In the Epistle there is a renewed emphasis on Jesus as a figure of the past. To put it another way, the problem is no longer occasioned by the absence of Jesus, but his spiritual presence, or at least what is said about him with the authorization of the Spirit.

Before turning to the Epistles, however, we should consider the Revelation to John, particularly the so-called letters to the seven churches of chapters 2–3. That the author of Revelation is the same as the evangelist or the elder of the letters (2 and 3 John) is generally, and I think correctly, denied by critical scholarship. (Interestingly, however, only in Revelation does the author call himself “John.”) The differences in language, literary style, and theology are all too great. Yet there are points of similarity: for example, the emphasis on witness and witnessing (testimony and testifying); the portrayal of Christ as the Word of God (Rev 19:13); Christ’s or his followers’ “conquering.” (Jörg Frey has not too long ago once again made the case—I think convincingly—for the Apocalypse’s relation to the Johannine school.)¹² For our purposes the most significant connections are found in these letters to the seven churches of Asia.

At the outset John of Patmos sees the heavenly, exalted, Son of Man, who announces the messages to be written to each of the angels of the churches. Yet each of these messages is at the end described as “what the Spirit is saying to the churches.” So these seem to be messages from Christ delivered in writing to the angels of the seven churches, who presumably deliver their respective messages to the churches themselves. The I-words throughout the letters

¹² Jörg Frey’s long essay, “Erwägungen zum Verhältnis der Johannesapokalypse zu den übrigen Schriften des Corpus Johanneum,” concludes (326–42) Martin Hengel’s *Die johanneische Frage: Ein Lösungsversuch*, WUNT, 67 (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1993).

also make it clear that these are messages of the exalted Jesus Christ himself.¹³ It is he who says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." Yet the whole process is described as the Spirit's speaking to the churches. Thus the heavenly Son of Man, Christ, and the Spirit are very closely associated, if not actually identified. What is promised from the Paraclete in the Gospel seems to be fulfilled in what is now happening among the churches of Asia Minor (although the Spirit is not called *παράκλητος* in Revelation). The message is, or has become, one of ethical exhortation, encouragement, and warning. There are clear hints at the existence of doctrinal problems (e.g., "the deep things of Satan" in 2:24; cf. 2:25 and 2 John 9), but in Revelation these do not yet seem central. In 1 and 2 John, however, heresy of a christological sort is the crucial danger.

We can draw some lines of connection between the Gospel, Revelation, and the Epistles. These lines cannot be demonstrated, but they seem quite probable. So how do they connect? What picture can be drawn? First of all, in Revelation and 1 John (probably also 2 John), we see signs of Christian prophets at work—not all, however, on the right side. John of Patmos is himself such a prophet, (1:3; 22:18–19), a role that the wicked Jezebel also claims (2:20). (Perhaps it is significant that the Jezebel of Rev 2:20 styles herself a prophetess, even as she leads the church of Thyatira astray.) In the Fourth Gospel such prophets are not explicitly named, but the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, gives utterance to words of Jesus, either by way of reminder or extending into the present (and future) what Jesus said in the past or would say were he present. Such words were presumably uttered by prophets. As we have noted, such prophets are not mentioned in the Gospel, even as the Spirit-Paraclete is not mentioned in Revelation or the Epistles. Although the Spirit is not called *παράκλητος* in 1 John, the exalted Christ is (2:1): "We have an Advocate [*παράκλητος*] with the Father. . . ." Thus when the Paraclete is first mentioned in the Gospel, we hear of "another Paraclete" (or Advocate; 14:16), whom the Father will send on Jesus' petition. It may be, as we shall observe, that there are reasons why in 1 John *παράκλητος* is used only of Jesus.

¹³ On the sayings of Jesus in Revelation, see David E. Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, Word Biblical Commentary 52 (Dallas: Word Books, 1997) 264–65, who cites relevant bibliography.

If in the Gospel there is no mention of Christian prophets, Jesus himself is called a prophet (4:19; 6:14). While this title may be inadequate for Johannine Christology, it is not erroneous, and the followers of Jesus recapitulate his ministry (20:21). Perhaps such Christian prophets are not yet mentioned because John presents the disciples as they were during Jesus' historic ministry. They lack post-resurrection knowledge and have not assumed the roles they will later play. Yet the role of the Christian prophet in the post-resurrection Johannine community was likely a large one. If the Spirit-Paraclete was to pronounce words of Jesus, someone must actually have done the speaking if the words were to be heard throughout the community. Probably the best evidence for the existence of such words of Jesus is the Gospel of John itself. (We have already noted such words in Revelation 1–3, and in 2 Cor 12:8–9 Paul speaks of receiving a word from the Lord.) Virtually all the words of Jesus "sound" Johannine although a number have synoptic parallels. For example 12:25 has the typical Johannine cadence and terminology: "He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life." Yet it has impressive synoptic parallels, not only in Mark (8:34 *et par.*), but also in Q (Matt. 10:39; Luke 17:33). It has, therefore, triple attestation. One can imagine this is a traditional saying of Jesus of which the Spirit-Paraclete has reminded the community. On the other hand, Jesus also says: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (14:6). This sounds, and is, quite Johannine and is, moreover, without significant synoptic parallels. One can imagine that this is a Spirit-inspired word originating with the post-resurrection, exalted Jesus. This sayings suits, and speaks to, the situation of the Johannine church in its conflict with the synagogue. Jesus makes sweeping revelatory and salvific claims for himself, which fit that situation. Those who reject Jesus (i.e., the Johannine community's proclamation of Jesus) cut themselves off from God.

Such sayings have often been regarded as theological, literary creations of the evangelist, or his community/church. Perhaps one can too easily imagine the learned theologian sitting at his desk with other Gospels, documents, or fragments of tradition before him, which he regards as inadequate. So he shapes them to suit his needs or creates sayings that will make the theological points that need making. All the time he is thinking: "If I put them on the lips of Jesus everybody will have to acknowledge them." Then they will be

authoritative. Possibly, but such a scenario is as improbable in antiquity as it would seem to be today. Are not these words of Jesus more intelligible as Spirit-inspired prophetic words delivered with self-authenticating authority and power, probably within a church whose worship was charismatic?

The portrayal of Jesus promising to send the Spirit-Paraclete also forms an intelligible background for what we read about the work of prophets inspired by the Spirit in Revelation and the Epistles of John. Is the Gospel of John therefore earlier than Revelation and the Epistles? I think so, at least in the case of the Epistles, which seem to presuppose something very much like the Gospel, although they do not quote it.¹⁴ As for Revelation, I do not know. Although ancient tradition puts it late in the first century, in the period of the Emperor Domitian, this is less than certain. It could be earlier, and also earlier than the Gospel of John.¹⁵ Certainly its futuristic eschatology suggests a time earlier than the Gospel, reflecting an urgent apocalyptic expectancy (e.g., 22:20) that the Gospel modifies or corrects (cf. John 11:25; 14:22; as well as 21:23).

In the farewell discourses of the Gospel Jesus speaks to disciples who cannot yet understand him because they have not yet attained the post-resurrection, eschatological knowledge they will have when Jesus is glorified and they have received the Spirit (7:39). Thus Jesus says things that he understands and the reader who is a Johannine "insider" can understand. But the disciples are not yet in a position to understand. One might say that John has created a literary fiction in the sense that he has portrayed the disciples as they would have been before the glorification of Jesus and Jesus as he was after his glorification. (Actually this is an example of the two levels in John.)

¹⁴ On the priority of the Gospel of John over the Epistles, see Brown, *Epistles of John*, 32–35, whose summation (34–35) I find persuasive. Nevertheless, some commentators before and after Brown are not convinced, most notably recently Georg Strecker, *The Johannine Letters*, trans. Linda M. Mahoney and ed. Harold Attridge, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996) xxxv–xlii, 4, and *passim*.

¹⁵ Aune, *Revelation*, lvi–lxx, shows that the evidence for dating Revelation is mixed, and that while the final edition appeared at the end of the first century (Trajan), there was likely an earlier edition to be dated in the 60s, if not earlier. C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text* (rev. ed.; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1978), conjectures that the Apocalypse has quite ancient roots that go back to the Son of Thunder, i.e., John the Son of Zebedee (Mark 3:17), who may have himself composed apocalyptic works (133–34; also cf. 62).

In the Apocalypse of John, however, we see the process the Gospel presumes as future actually at work. That is, Jesus and the disciples are in the same time-frame. The exalted Christ speaks words to the churches that are delivered by the Spirit with the help of the prophet who writes these things down. The work of the Spirit is then a factor of fundamental importance holding the Johannine books together. Yet the Gospel, Epistles, and Revelation represent different perspectives, problems and issues.

In the Apocalypse the Spirit is not named the Paraclete, but appears to fulfill the function or role of delivering words of Jesus. In the Epistles also the Spirit-Paraclete is not mentioned and neither is anything said about such a role. Jesus himself is the Paraclete or Advocate. In fact, the Spirit plays a somewhat different role in the Epistles, although the doctrine or concept is there (see 1 John 3:24, 4:13), doubtless corresponding to the experienced reality of the community. Probably the anointing that teaches and provides knowledge is the Holy Spirit (2:20, 27).¹⁶

In the First Epistle the abiding of Jesus with believers is contingent upon their obeying his commandments (1 John 3:23), as in the Gospel (e.g., John 14:13–21). The Spirit is then the source, or channel, of the believer's assurance (3:24). So 1 John clearly knows the Gospel or at least its substantive theological content with respect to the Spirit. This knowledge is certainly present, and its importance not denied. Yet the principle and practice of spiritual authority has led to a problem, which is articulated in 1 John 4:1–6. Before getting into that, however, it is important to note that the discussion of the problem that has arisen is framed within an acknowledgment of the work of the Spirit, called in the Fourth Gospel the Paraclete, of course.

Whether or not 1 John knows the Gospel in its present, canonical form, a similar concept of the work of the Spirit is assumed, and this seems to be the basis of the warning given in 4:1–6. The situation addressed here is clear enough. First, the false prophets who have gone into the world are mentioned (4:1). Apparently they utter words that they claim to be Spirit-inspired, but in the author's view only those who confess Jesus Christ come in the flesh are inspired

¹⁶ After a finely nuanced discussion, Brown (*Epistles of John* 342–48) concludes that "it is likely that the author was referring to an *anointing with the Holy Spirit*, the gift *from Christ* which constituted one as a Christian" (348).

by the Spirit of God (vs. 2). Those who do not make this confession are not of God (vs. 3). Rather, they give utterance to the spirit of the antichrist (vs. 3) and of error (vs. 6). How does one distinguish? By their doctrinal content, of course.¹⁷ The false prophets who are inspired by the spirit of the antichrist or of error apparently do not confess that Jesus is come in the flesh (vs. 2). Thus they do not confess Jesus (vs. 3). There is an alternative (vs. 3) reading: "does away with Jesus" or "dissolves Jesus" (λύει), which is attractive, since it implies the docetism that is evidently the issue here, but is not strongly attested and is probably not original.¹⁸

In 2 John also the same christological issue is raised and here the denial that Jesus has come in the flesh is, explicitly said to be the work of deceivers who have gone out into the world (vs. 7). Such a person is the deceiver and the antichrist. Whether 1 John or 2 John is the earlier, the setting or problem situation seems on the face of it to be the same.

Despite the fact that the term antichrist (ἀντὶχριστός) is often used to designate the manifestation of the traditional eschatological enemy of God and the Messiah, it actually occurs only in these two Johannine letters in the New Testament, and aside from the passages just noted, only in 1 John 2:18 and 22.¹⁹ In 1 John 2:18–27 his role as the eschatological enemy is made clear. The antichrist is the one who denies Jesus as the Christ (2:22). It does not say "denies Jesus has come in the flesh," although that is probably meant (as in 2 John 7). Jews, indeed, everyone except the early Christians denied that Jesus was the Christ—if they thought about the matter at all. A specific confession, or lack of confession, by a specific person or party is apparently in view. The emphasis falls on Jesus rather than Christ: "... that *Jesus* is the Christ."

That such a denial of the fleshliness, and therefore the humanity, of Jesus is in view is supported by the prologue of 1 John, which is

¹⁷ On the problem of spiritual authority in the early church see also 1 Cor 15:3 and *Did.* 11:7, as well as 1 Thess 5:19–21.

¹⁸ Although Brown argues for its originality (*Epistles of John*, 494–96), and thus agrees with Bultmann and Schnackenburg, most recently Strecker (*Johannine Letters*, 136) rejects it: "It may have entered the text rather late, under the influence of the christological conflicts." He cites also the article of Bart Ehrman, "1 John 4:3 and the Orthodox Corruption of Scripture," *JNW* 79 (1988) 221–43.

¹⁹ For the traditional eschatological enemy, see 2 Thess 2:3–4; Mark 13:5–6, 21–22; Rev 20:7–10. Many other examples could be cited. Apparently, the term Antichrist appears only in Christian literature in antiquity.

obviously modeled on the prologue found in the Gospel.²⁰ As is now commonly observed, “the beginning” (ἀρχή, 1:1) is no longer the primordial beginning, but as is immediately evident, the beginning of the Christian tradition, namely, Jesus. Clearly 1 John echoes the Gospel as the Gospel echoes Genesis, but the narrowing down upon Jesus is evident, particularly if this statement is to be understood in light of 4:2–3 and 2 John 7, as it should be. (This interpretation may be circular, but sometimes circularity makes for good interpretation rather than bad.) “What we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands” is not a pre-existent word, or even the word of historical revelation in general, but the word made flesh (John 1:14). What is next said about the life which was with the Father being revealed (vs. 2) alludes to the Gospel’s prologue; but then to have seen and born witness points to the historic manifestations of Jesus, as does the subsequent reference in v. 3 to having seen and heard.

As the letter takes an ethical turn the meaning of this beginning in the prologue becomes even clearer (2:3): “Now by this we may be sure that we know him [Jesus] if we obey his commandments.” Again, the indissoluble connection of knowledge of Jesus and obedience to him echoes the farewell discourses of the Gospel (14:18–24). Then there is a specific reference to Jesus’ commandment that differs strikingly from the Gospel’s: “Beloved, I am writing you no new commandment, but an old commandment which you had from the beginning; the old commandment is the word which you have heard” (1 John 2:7 RSV). Yet this “old commandment” is also new (1 John 2:8 RSV): “Yet I am writing you a new commandment, which is true in him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining.” The author plays upon “old and new,” because he and his readers clearly know the new commandment found in the Fourth Gospel (13:34; 15:12). But it has now become important to say first of all that it is old. Why?

Because it comes from Jesus himself. “Whoever says, ‘I abide in him,’ ought to walk just as he walked” (2:6), that is, “in his steps” (cf. 1 Pet 2:21). The old commandment is the one the followers of Jesus have had from the beginning (ἀρχή again), which they have

²⁰ Brown argues that the Epistle’s prologue is not only modeled on the Gospel’s, but would scarcely be intelligible apart from it (*Epistles of John* 176–80).

heard (1 John 2:7). The commandment is of course to love one another (3:11): "For this is the message you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another." This summation picks up on the initial statement of 1:5: "This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all." Walking in the light is walking as Jesus walked (2:6), following his example, as well as obeying the command of love: "We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another" (1 John 3:16; cf. John 15:12). Not to follow Jesus' command is to walk in darkness (1:6), no matter what one may say or claim (2:9–10): "Whoever says, 'I am in the light,' while hating a brother or sister, is still in the darkness. Whoever loves a brother or sister lives in the light. . . ." Jesus' commandment is "that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us" (3:23). In this last statement the subject is really God, but the command clearly comes from Jesus, so closely do God and Jesus coincide—in the Epistle even more than in the Gospel. (No wonder commentators cannot agree on whether the antecedent of a pronoun in 1 John is Jesus or God!)²¹ At this point (3: 24) the Spirit is mentioned as the one who assures believers of their abiding—in Christ and God. Then follows the warning we have just dealt with about false prophets and the spirit of error (4:1–6).

Later there is a second affirmation of the work of the Spirit (4:13)—"By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit." These positive Spirit words frame the warnings about false prophets and their claims. But finally, John returns to the historical Jesus.

And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. (1 John 4:14–15 RSV)

Note the emphasis on having seen and testifying. One could say instead of "testify," "bear witness." I like "bear witness," for it implies in English, as it seems to have in Greek, that one sees and reports

²¹ Brown's discussions are precise and finely nuanced, as he repeatedly attempts to determine with precision what the antecedent in any given case may be (cf. on 3:23–24 p. 464) and maintains that "regularly 1 John attributes commandments to God." Strecker (*Johannine Letters* 127) sees, I think correctly, that precision is scarcely to be attained.

on what one has seen. Thus in the RSV of John 1:34, John (the Baptist) says, "And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God." Or even in the prologue (1:8): "He was not the light but came to bear witness (NRSV "testify to") the light." Again in 3:11: "Truly, truly I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen. . . ." (RSV). In 1 John the apostolic seeing and testifying means reporting on what one has seen.

Perhaps it has now become evident why the Spirit is not called *παράκλητος*, the Paraclete, in 1 John. That title is reserved for Jesus, the exalted Jesus who pleads to the Father (2:1). He is the Jesus of the past, who has been seen, and of the present, but now he is with the Father. (The same construction, *πρός* with the accusative, is used in 1 John 2:1 and John 1:2: "The Word was with God.") The idea of advocacy is clearly present, but place is also important, as in the Gospel. Jesus Christ the righteous is still with the Father. What he did and said and continues to do are of utmost relevance. But what he had to say to the church he has already said to his disciples. It is essential that he be remembered and obeyed and that his reality and word not be distorted. Thus the author of 1 John declines to bestow the title of Paraclete (Counselor or Advocate) upon the Spirit, or anyone else. (The Evangelist of course knows that Jesus was the original Paraclete, for he introduces the Spirit of truth as another Paraclete.)

In this connection, we should observe that 1 John does not quite close the circle we have attempted to draw here. Nowhere in 1 John (or in the Johannine Epistles) is it said that the prophets in question give utterance to words of Jesus himself. Obviously, the prophets who do not confess that Jesus has come in the flesh (1 John 4:3; 2 John 7) claim the authority of the Spirit, and therefore of God, and presumably of Jesus Christ. If we are on target so far, there is a common charismatic milieu and dimension of the Gospel, Revelation, and Epistles of John. But only in the Gospel and Revelation is Jesus himself represented as speaking through the Spirit. This is promised in the Gospel and attested in Revelation, but missing in the Epistle(s). I do not know why it is missing in the Epistles, particularly 1 John, but one can make an educated guess.

Possibly the epistolary author simply does not know, or know of, such Spirit-conveyed words of Jesus. Yet if they are charismatic phenomena characteristic of the Johannine community, this would seem unlikely. Probably he was familiar with the Spirit-inspired utterance

of such words. Why then would he not mention them? Although they were a part of his community's worship and practice, he sees a danger inherent in them. Rather than denounce the practice itself, he denounces the false doctrine that has been produced. At the same time he also withholds the title Paraclete from the Spirit, reserving it for Jesus, who *is* our Advocate *with* the Father and *was* present with us. The effect would have been to put the brakes on such Spirit-inspired production of words of Jesus, which nevertheless belonged to the history, tradition, and practice of his community, on which his own theological understanding was based. Thus it became important for him to reiterate that Jesus' command, to love one another, was old, as well as new. That is, it goes back to the earthly Jesus and was delivered during his historic ministry.

John's quest for Jesus has a dual focus, the present and the past. In the Gospel emphasis lies on the present, that is, the presence of Jesus in the church. In the Epistles, especially 1 John, emphasis returns to the past. In the Gospel there is ample evidence that the presence of Jesus is regarded as an extension of his past historical reality. John takes seriously the factuality of Jesus and the trustworthiness of the witness on which the Gospel is based. The question is how does the past reality of Jesus, and the witness to him, extend into the future and thus into the church's present. What are the limitations? Are there criteria? There must be. In 1 John doctrine becomes an essential criterion or test of whether Jesus, or the Spirit of truth, is speaking.²² This is put succinctly in 1 John 3:23: "And this is his commandment, that he should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he commanded us." Thus for 1 John particularly, while faith is believing in—trusting—there is also an irreducible kernel of believing that. There is a givenness of revelation that follows from its historical character. Who Jesus is cannot be separable from who Jesus was, even as who he was can never be isolated from who he is to the believer, and even to the historian. John seems to know this. Moreover, believing, to be meaningful, is inseparable from obeying.

There is then a real and significant sense in which the Epistles, particularly 1 and 2 John, emphasize the continuing necessity of

²² Strecker has a most helpful discussion of the docetist heresy against which 1 John apparently struggles (*Johannine* Epistles 69–76), although he is unwilling to see in 1 John an "early Catholicism" that has equated truth with dogma (244–49).

turning again and again to the past, to what was, from the beginning, namely Jesus, in order to understand Christian revelation. To understand is then to obey: to obey Jesus and in doing so to obey God.

We began thinking about the so-called quest of the historical Jesus, a modern undertaking, but one that finds some ancient precedent. Such quests, whether ancient or modern, are seldom, if ever, without some agenda, often theological. Perhaps the Fourth Gospel's approach to Jesus is too self-assured—or Spirit-assured—to best be described as a quest. Moreover, the Fourth Evangelist claims to have a witness, or to be a witness worthy of great confidence. It is of course of fundamental importance to him that the word became flesh and dwelt among us (1:14 RSV).²³ Yet for John the pressing issue is how the pre-existent and glorified, exalted Jesus imposes himself on the present, on us. Fundamentally, the answer is given in the coming of the Spirit-Paraclete, as we have seen. This John presses Jesus into the present and (from Jesus' perspective) the future.

If 1 John is later than the Gospel, as I, along with many commentators, suspect, its author seems deliberately to ignore this process. The Jesus who is, and will be, is still subject to the Jesus who was. The Evangelist would not, of course, have denied the was-ness of Jesus, but his interest was shifting forward. The epistolary author, however, wants to emphasize the continuing and normative function of who Jesus was. Thus the new commandment is also the old commandment which the disciples, the church, have had from the beginning (1 John 2:7–8).

There has been in the history of Christianity, as already in the New Testament, a predisposition to look back, to the beginning, for criteria and norms. "The old is better," says Jesus in Luke 5:39 according to some MSS. Probably that is not the original reading, but it reflects a classic Christian theological disposition. Finally Jesus

²³ To what extent is John 1:14 to be seen against the background of docetic denial of Jesus' humanity, and therefore 1 John's explicit antidocetism? In his famous monograph, Käsemann rejected traditional concepts of incarnation, including Bultmann's, as inappropriate to the Fourth Gospel (Käsemann, *Testament of Jesus*, 9–12, *et passim*) and described the Gospel as "naively docetic" (26, 66, 70). On this whole problem see Marianne Meyer Thompson, *The Humanity of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), republished as *The Incarnate Word* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1993). The historical interest and validity of the Fourth Gospel are reconsidered in D. Moody Smith, *John among the Gospels*, rev. ed. (Columbia: University of South Carolina, 2001) 195–241, "John, an Independent Gospel."

is the norm against which what follows—even the claim to speak in Jesus' name—must be judged. Getting back to Jesus is not as easy an undertaking as one might think, or hope. More than two centuries of Jesus research have taught us that. But the impulse to turn back toward Jesus is a very ancient one, one that is reflected in the Johannine literature. While the Gospel sees Jesus in the present, and the Apocalypse sees him in the future as well, 1 John insists on his pastness. The quest of the historical Jesus—or should I say the original Jesus?—has an obvious New Testament basis.

Obviously this fact does not warrant everything that has happened under the aegis of “the Quest” or of “Jesus research.” It does, however, make it understandable theologically. And it shouldn't surprise us that we can detect theological agendas at work. I suppose no “purely historical” quest will be willing to admit to such a theological agenda. On the other hand, no Christology can dispense with any or all historical agendas. Faith in Jesus looks to the past, as well as the present and future.

In his significant work on the Johannine literature Peder Borgen has often illumined these texts by looking outward, to their broader cultural and religious milieux, an essential historical task. In this essay in his honor, I have looked inward, to inner-Johannine relationships, a task that is also historical, and hopefully will also be useful to exegetes, as Peder's work continues to be.²⁴

²⁴ This article, in slightly expanded form, was delivered as the Kenneth W. Clark Lectures in Duke Divinity School, March 5 and 6, 2002.

KNOWING THE TRUTH: EPISTEMOLOGY AND COMMUNITY IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL

Howard Clark Kee

1. *Introduction*

Knowing is of major importance for the writer of the Fourth Gospel. The three words relating to knowledge in this gospel occur with much greater frequency here than in the other gospels: *eidenai*, *ginosko*, *gnoridzo*. For example, the first of these words for “know” occurs 33 times in John, in contrast to 15 times in Mark, and 13 times in Matthew and Luke. The repeated use of terms for “knowledge” in John has led some scholars over the years to assume that this gospel was influential in the development of gnosticism, for which gnosis is, of course, the basic term. But Rudolf Bultmann, who finds gnostic features in the letters of Paul and elsewhere in the New Testament, points out that in this gospel, *ginoskein* does not mean knowledge from investigation, observation or speculation, nor through mystical vision remote from historical contacts or action; it achieves concrete expression in historical acts. Instead, the knowledge of Jesus or of God expresses itself in love—as loving action and also in awareness of being loved.¹

In the Gospel of John knowing appears in four different modes: (1) recognition of the true identity of a person; (2) knowing God, which includes mystical participation in the divine life; (3) knowing or understanding the truth; (4) making the truth known to those within the community of faith. The powerful link between knowledge and truth is set forth in 8:32: “And you will know the truth

¹ Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John I–XII*, AB 29 (Garden City: Doubleday, 1965) lii–lvi, and *The Gospel according to John XIII–XXI*, AB 29A (Garden City: Doubleday, 1970) 1135–1144, presents a persuasive argument against the thesis advanced by Bultmann that the background of the portrayal of Christ in this gospel is the gnostic figure who is pictured in the gnostic documents discovered in Egypt in 1947 (see Rudolf Bultmann, *Primitive Christianity in its Contemporary Setting* (Cleveland: World Publishing, 1956) 196–198.

and the truth will make you free.” Specifically, truth is used in this gospel with a range of connotations:

- (a) The true nature and purpose of God as revealed through Christ;
- (b) True worship of, and obedience to God;
- (c) The truth which provides the sole authentic and effective access to God;
- (d) The Spirit of God is identified as the Spirit of truth, which comes upon and illumines the faithful community.

The details of these themes are spelled out in what follows. It is clear that in this gospel, truth is not merely a matter of intellectual concepts but involves also a mode of behavior and relationships toward God and within the new community. It is essential in interpreting the Gospel of John—and indeed of any text—to examine this document in light of what can be discerned as the perspectives and assumptions inherent in the text, specifically as the author seeks to communicate the meaning and the social implications of this material.

The outcome of this method of analysis of these features of the Fourth Gospel corresponds to the results from examination of any documents when the method employed is what is known as sociology of knowledge. As I observed in my study, *Knowing the Truth: A Sociological Approach to New Testament Interpretation*:

Historians and biblical interpreters need to take with full seriousness the distinctiveness of the communities and contexts in which the gospel was heard and responded to in faith . . . Also to be taken into account is the process of social and cultural change which took place in the New Testament period—in the wider Roman world both culturally and sociologically, which requires sensitivity concerning what Jean Piaget has called the transformation of structures. Even when the verbal designations for group membership and leadership remain the same, the connotations and the networks of human relationships are transformed. . . . To become aware of these processes demands careful assessment of the evidence, with full attention to the earlier forms of the tradition, to the social and cultural forces which contributed to the changes in it, and to the resultant transformations.²

It is to these socio-cultural features of the Gospel and Letters of John that we now turn.

² Howard Clark Kee, *Knowing the Truth: A Sociological Approach to New Testament Interpretation* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989) 26.

2. *Jesus as the Divinely Empowered Agent and Embodiment of the Truth.*

In John 14:6 Jesus replies to the question of Thomas as to where he is going and how his followers can know “the way” set forth in the explicit claim: “I am the way, the truth and the life.” This is followed by his declaration, “No one comes to the Father except by me.” Thus Jesus is said to be the only agent who provides this access to God: as “the unique Son from the Father” (1:14) he discloses to humans the divine glory. The central factor here is Jesus’ assertion that he is the embodiment as well as the bearer of divine truth. In 1 John 5:20 Jesus is referred to as “him who is true.” Thus the role of Jesus is not merely to convey truth about God; rather, he incarnates the truth of God.

The major image for this role of Jesus as the one who embodies and conveys the truth of God is that of “the true light that enlightens every human” which has now come “into the world” (1:9). The life which he embodies serves as “the light of humans.” It has come into the world, and “the darkness” which is operative through the powers of evil “has not overcome it” (1:4). The Old Testament background of the light which Jesus brings—*doxa*—is of course the cloud of glory in the innermost sanctuary of the temple, seen only by the high priest, but perceived to be powerful evidence of the presence of God in the midst of his people. Now it is not the temple-based priests, but the members of the new faithful community alone who in Jesus can claim to have “beheld his glory—glory as of the unique Son from the Father” (1:14). It is they alone who have been granted “the power to become the children of God” (1:12).

Membership in this new people of God is attainable only through a new mode of birth, which is achieved through “water and the Spirit” (3:5)—that is, by the visible, public act of identifying with the new community through participating in the rite of baptism, and through the accompanying invisible, transforming work of the Spirit. Yet water is also the symbol of the outflow of the Spirit through the lives of the faithful, as promised in 7:37–39, where those who come to Jesus trusting and seeking to know God’s purpose for his people will experience the fulfillment of the prophetic promise “Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water” (7:38).³

³ Brown, *Gospel According to John I–XII* 326–8, notes that the background of the Feast of Tabernacles is a major factor in this passage. It derived from the prophecy

Fidelity to Christ's word will characterize his true disciples, will be supported by their knowledge of the truth, and will serve to liberate them from slavery to sin (8:31–32). The radical import of these claims is evident when Jesus, in response to a challenge from the Jewish authorities, declares his historical priority to Abraham and his oneness with Yahweh: "Before Abraham came into being, I am" (8:58). These declarations involve radical new ways of perceiving both God and the covenant people. Jesus is the divine agent through whom will now be manifest both (1) the insights as to the purpose of God for the renewal of his people and of the world and (2) the capability to achieve this renewal, which is available through the Spirit. Following Jesus' death, resurrection from the dead, and exaltation, the continuing manifestation of God's purpose and the power to fulfill it are seen as taking place, of course, through the coming of the Spirit. The role of instruction to be carried out by the Spirit is comprehensive (14:26). The sustaining, nourishing work of the Spirit corresponds to the indwelling of the risen Christ as pictured in the image of the fruitful vine (15:1–11). God, the vinedresser, will purge the branches that bear no fruit and do not remain faithful within the community. But those who continue to remain faithful to Christ and his instructions, and whose work produces fruitful results can be assured of continuing identity and experience as the people of God. They demonstrate in this way their identity with Christ and their fidelity to his message about the divine renewal of his people. This contrasts with the unfruitful people (15:6)—an image applied to ancient Israel in Psa 80:14–16, where God is implored to restore disobedient Israel, and in Ezek 15, where the unfruitful people are compared with a fruitless vine which is perceived to be useful only for burning "because they have acted faithlessly" (15:8).

Even though Jesus has told "the truth" to the Jewish leaders, they conspire with the Roman authorities to have him executed (8:40–46). Instead of defending the purpose of God, they are said to follow the lead of the devil, who "has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him," and because "he is a liar and the father of lies" (8:44). The dual witness to the truth required by the Law of Moses (Deut 19:15) is provided by Jesus and his Father (8:13–19),

of Zech 9–14, where the triumphant coming of the messianic king is pictured, and the consequent renewal of the people and of the land is evident in the outpouring of water from Jerusalem symbolizing the renewal of the people and of the land.

but it is rejected by the Pharisees and the other Jewish leaders. In the First Letter of John, truth includes not only what one believes about Jesus but also how one responds to him in one's way of life (1 John 1:6–7). Those who disobey Christ show thereby that the truth is not in them, while those who obey his word display in truth the fulfillment of God's love. Those who heed God's word are obedient to the spirit of truth (4:6); those who reject the message about Jesus show their submission to the spirit of error. Conversely, the world neither sees nor knows the spirit of truth (John 14:16–17). Truth is manifest through the effective power of three factors: the Spirit, the water, and the blood (1 John 5:8)—which represent: (1) the Spirit as the powerfully efficacious agent of God's work in the world; (2) in the rite of baptism, by which one's identity with the people of God is declared publicly; and (3) in the death of Jesus, by which God's love for his people is publicly manifest (1 John 4:9) and they are cleansed from all sin (1 John 1:7). This latter factor is proclaimed by John the Baptist at his initial encounter with Jesus: "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). Truth in this gospel, therefore, is not merely a body of conceptual insights, but involves following the divinely intended way of human life. This is explicit in 3:21, where it is asserted that "those who do the truth come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God." Jesus is the embodiment of this when he is portrayed as "the way, the truth, and the life" (14:6). Conversely, those who engage in evil deeds are those "who loved darkness rather than light" (3:19). Truth is also an essential element for those who engage in true worship of God: "The true worshippers will worship the Father in Spirit and in truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him" (4:23), whereas the devil "does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him" (8:44).

Similarly, in 1 John, because Christ has come, "the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining" (2:8). Whoever obeys Jesus' love command, "truly in this person the love of God has reached perfection" (2:5). Hence this call to love "is true in him and in you" (2:8). Love is to manifest itself "not in word or speech" alone, "but in truth and action" (3:18). This way of life brings assurance of participation in the life of God's people: "By this we will know that we are of the truth, and reassure our hearts before him (3:19).

Thus Jesus is portrayed in this gospel and the letters as the divinely empowered agent of God and the embodiment of the truth. This

conviction is conveyed through explicit claims made by Jesus and is linked with the term, “I am,” with which are offered the images of the roles that Jesus fulfills in the outworking of the purpose of God for his people. We have already noted the central importance of the claim in 14:6, “I am the way, the truth and the life,” and of the self-identification of Jesus as “I am” in 8:58. Jesus’ role as the divine light is described by John the Baptist (1:6–9) and is directly claimed by Jesus in 8:12—“I am the light of the world”—and again when he was about to heal the man born blind (9:5). Jesus’ role as the one who grants access to the people of God is presented with multiple features in John 10: he is the gate by which his people may enter (10:7) and may find protection from the powers of evil and an ongoing place of refuge and support (10:9). The more traditional designations of Jesus as the agent of God to form and sustain his people—as Son of Man and Son of God—are also offered in modes redefined from the dominant Jewish traditions. Thus, in 3:14 his being lifted up on the cross as the Son of Man is foreseen (8:28 and 12:32,34). In response to the hostile reaction to Jesus on the part of the Jewish leaders (10:22–39), Jesus reaffirms that he is “God’s Son,” that God has sanctified him, that the deeds he is doing are “the works of my Father,” and “the Father is in me and I am in the Father.”

3. *Through Jesus the Inner Presence of the Truth is Provided for the People of God: The Spirit*

Following the death, resurrection and exaltation of Jesus, the continuing divine presence with God’s people and the source of their direction and enablement is the Holy Spirit. Christ’s role as the initial instructor of the new community is to be continued through the Holy Spirit: “He will teach you all things, and will bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you (14:26). The Spirit is identified as the Paraclete,⁴ which is here called “the Spirit of truth.” This divine reality the world can neither see nor know. His followers

⁴ An excellent, comprehensive analysis of the meanings of the term *parakletos* in the Gospel of John is provided by Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXII* 1136–1137. The roles of the Paraclete in John are seen to be a witness in defense of Jesus, a spokesman for Jesus in his trial, a consoler of the disciples, and their teacher and guide.

will know the Spirit, however, because he dwells among them and within them (14:17). Thus insights as to God's purpose for the renewal of his people and of the creation are known through the Spirit and are experienced as inward perceptions and enablement, which together comprise "the truth."

There are in this gospel three images by which the presence and power of the Spirit are depicted: as wind, as water, and as vine. Two of these features are combined in Jesus' pronouncement about the new birth as essential for entering the kingdom of God: "Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, one cannot enter the kingdom of God" (3:5). In 3:8 Jesus declares, "The wind blows where it wills, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know from whence it comes or whither it goes: so it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." Thus the Spirit is pictured as a central factor for entrance into the life of the people of God. In 6:63 is affirmed that "It is the Spirit that gives life" and that "the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life." Further, the Spirit is the ground of true worship of God the Father: "The hour is coming and now is when the true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and in truth, for such the Father seeks to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth" (4:23). The Spirit is the divinely-provided instrument for humans to understand the right relationship to God which Jesus has made possible—which is the truth!—and proper worship is the appropriate mode for celebration of that relationship.

Water is a pervasive image in this gospel. The primary text is 3:5, where it is asserted that unless one is born of water and the Spirit, one cannot enter the kingdom of God. But prior to this pronouncement, the symbolic significance of water is evident and continues throughout the gospel. The stone jars filled with water for "the Jewish rites of purification" are unexpectedly filled with wine (2:6–10), which is here seen as the in-breaking of something new through Jesus, and as a manifestation of his "glory." The abundant baptismal activity of Jesus among his disciples is carried out not only in the Jewish territories of Judea and Galilee, but also in Samaria, where he planned to use the water from the well associated with the name of Jacob⁵

⁵ Clearly the linking of Jacob with this well is intended to associate it with Jewish tradition, even though there is no mention in the Old Testament of a well of Jacob.

(4:1–6). Clearly the intent is to point up Jesus' radical redefinition of the basis for participation in the people of God.

Linking water and the Spirit of God appeared in the prophetic and wisdom traditions of Israel. The earlier prophets picture the renewal of the people of Israel as a sign of divine favor. In Zech 14:8, where the ultimate triumph over the enemies of God's people and their divine establishment are foreseen as a transformation of the city and the land of Israel: a major symbol of outpouring of God's blessing is predicted as "living waters [that] shall flow out from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea and half to the western sea; it shall continue in summer as in winter." Psa 78:15–16 recalls God's gracious provision for his people as they were escaping from slavery in Egypt: "He gave them drink abundantly as from the deep. He made streams come out of the rock, and caused waters to flow down like rivers." In Isa 43:19 God provides in the wilderness rivers "to give drink to my chosen people." This image linking water and Spirit is seen in Isa 44:1–5 as a sign of the transformation of the creation which accompanies the renewal of God's people. In Prov 18:4 the words of the mouth uttered by wisdom are depicted as deep water, and the fountain of wisdom is a gushing stream. Moses' role as the one who led forth Israel into the promised land is epitomized in his having provided "food from heaven in abundance. He opened the rock, and water gushed out; it flowed in the desert like a river," in fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham (Psa 105:41–42). In John 7:37 Jesus invites all the thirsty who believe in him to drink of the Spirit which will flow forth for them like the water promised to flow from the temple and renew the land and the whole creation (Ezek 47:1–12).

The image of the vine is developed in detail in John 15, where Jesus is identified as the vine and God the Father as the vine-grower, and the members of the new community have the divinely intended and enabled role of bearing fruit through their dependence upon Jesus and his words (15:7–8). They are to continue in the love they have experienced through Christ and to love one another (15:9–10), although they are also to be prepared for encountering hatred, persecution and martyrdom by the religious authorities, just as Jesus

Described in Josh 24:32 is Jacob's purchase of land at Shechem and the burial there of Joseph. In John 4 the imagery of the well and its water serves to highlight the contrast between covenantal participation in the old and new modes.

did (15:18–16:2). In spite of this fierce opposition they are to continue to bear witness to the truth, for which they are to be guided and enabled by the Spirit of God (15:26–27). The departure of Christ is a necessary preparation for the coming of the Spirit (16:7), whose role will be multiple: the Spirit will (1) confront the world regarding its sin in the rejection of Jesus; (2) seek to replace the false expectation of many that they may gain righteousness and acquittal in divine judgment by conforming to the law; (3) confirm the presence of Christ with the Father; (4) reassure the faithful in spite of the hatred they will confront; (5) enable them to endure the suffering they will experience. In the world they will undergo persecution, but in Christ they will find peace (16:1–4, 32–33).

4. *Doing the Truth: the Illumined, Obedient, and Sanctified Community.*

As noted above, truth in this gospel involves not merely correct concepts, but includes following the divinely-intended and prescribed way of life, as well as participation in authentic worship. This perception of truth is set forth explicitly in John 3:19–21. “The judgment” is not seen here as an event in the future when God evaluates the human race. Instead, the judgment involves crucial decisions about the future of the human race, which are made when humans respond to the divine disclosure that has come through Jesus. The behavior of those who reject the light from God in Jesus is the outcome of their loving darkness rather than light because they do not want the divine light to expose or highlight their evil deeds. Conversely, those who “do what is true” come to the light seeking illumination from God. Thus it is clearly evident that what they have done—which embodies truth—has been wrought in God. The behavior of the evil-doers is the consequence of their preferring the darkness of evil to the light of God’s transforming light. But those who “do what is true” come to the light, so that “it may be clearly seen that [their] deeds have been wrought in God” (3:19–21).

In 8:31–38 Jesus declares that fidelity to his word—in trust and obedience—will enable those who hear his message to be “truly my disciples.” They “will know the truth, and the truth will make [them] free.” The issue is then raised as to what it is from which they will be freed, since their descent from Abraham has never involved them literally in slavery to other humans. Jesus explains that their enslavement

has been to sin. As slaves to sin, they will forfeit their place in the household of God's people. But as a true heir—"son"—the relationship with God and the new community will continue forever. Jesus' opponents among the Jewish leaders are identified as "the chief priests and Pharisees" who sent the officers to arrest him (7:32). These two groups represent the major centers of power and authority among the Jews at this time, based respectively (1) in the temple, where God was believed to dwell and which was hence the sole place where God was visibly accessible to humans—represented by the high priest—in the radiant cloud of glory in the Holy of Holies, and (2) in the synagogues, where the law was studied and proclaimed as the norm for Jewish life. The other major center of power for the Jews was in the regional council, or *synedrion*, which was comprised of Jewish leaders who were willing to serve as the Roman sanctioned and empowered agents of authority in the region, and who were thus engaged in effecting a compromise between Roman law and control on the one hand and Jewish norms and rules on the other. It is ironic that this collaborationist agency should have provided the name for the subsequent intra-Jewish body which in the rabbinic period set the rules for the Jews: the Sanhedrin.

The conversation of Jesus with the Jews in this gospel continues concerning his impending death, which he refers to in 8:21 simply as "I am going away". The leaders raise the possibility that he may commit suicide, which would terminate the movement that he has launched. But he points out that his death will provide access to God, where they "cannot come," since their role—as leaders of their people and as collaborators with the Roman authorities—is "of this world" (8:22–23). They will die in their sins unless they trust in Christ, whose being "lifted up" has two linked meanings: he will be raised up on the cross, and then he will be exalted by being raised from the dead. It is after these events that his hearers will have the possibility of understanding his role as the agent of God for the renewal of his people (8:28–29). Those who trust in him will be "truly" his disciples, will "know the truth and the truth will make [them] free" (8:31–32). Thus truth is the potent divine reality which provides the goals and the means to attain participation in God's new people.

Jesus then makes the point that, though his disciples are descendants of Abraham (8:33), they must continue to seek freedom from sin—which Jesus will provide for them (8:36). Some of his hearers,

though they claim to be children of God, are said to be actually children of the devil (8:44), who has nothing to do with the truth. Jesus' critics accuse him of being possessed by a demon (8:48), but he responds with the claim that those who keep his word—trusting and obeying what he tells them—will never die. The leaders who denounce him for his claims that he is greater than Abraham are told that it is God alone who supports his claims, that he is indeed the one whose coming Abraham foresaw, and that he thus can claim “truly, truly” to have been living “before Abraham was” (8:58). Jesus responds to the disbelief of the leaders: “Because I tell you the truth, you do not believe me.” His critics' refusal to hear in Jesus “the words of God” is a sign that they are “not of God” (8:47). Their rejection of the truth which he proclaims is evident when they “take up stones to throw at him,” a clear indication that the leaders see Jesus as a threat to their traditional perception of how God calls humans to be his people (8:59). Jesus thereupon escapes from execution by the Jewish leaders, who are depicted here as planning to use the standard Jewish method of crushing with stones.

5. *The Consequences of Humans' Refusal to Obey the Truth.*

Following Jesus' claim to be the light of the world (8:12), the Pharisees declare that his testimony concerning himself and his role is not true. To this accusation Jesus responds, “Even if I do bear witness to myself, my testimony is true, for I know whence I have come and whither I am going” (8:14). His critics know neither of these realities, but make their decisions “according to the flesh”—the limited, perverted human capacity for what is perceived by them to be knowledge. As required by Torah (Deut 19:15), Jesus' judgments and claims rest on dual testimony (Deut 19:15): Jesus' own testimony concerning himself and the ongoing witness of the Father concerning him. Together these constitute “true testimony” (8:17–18). Jesus explains that “he who sent me is true, and I declare to the world what I have heard from him” (8:26). Only after his opponents “have lifted up the Son of Man”—which will be on the cross as a culprit executed by the Romans as a violator of their political power: “King of the Jews” (18:18)—will they perceive who he is and realize that his actions and pronouncements are based not on his own authority, but that he speaks “as the Father taught me” (8:28). To the Jews

who have trusted in him and obey his message he gives assurance that “you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free (8:32). The promise of freedom is then explained to mean that his followers will no longer be slaves to sin but will live in accord with the freedom that is provided to the members of the new, true community of faith. Conversely, the critical opponents of Jesus, who claim to be God’s people because they are descendants of Abraham but who now seek Jesus’ death, are told by him that it is “because I tell the truth that you do not believe me” (8:45). If they were truly children of God, they would hear “the words of God “ through him.

There follows a challenge by Jesus to the Jewish leaders’ claim to be the children of Abraham, and hence participants in the covenant of God with his people (8:39–47), even as they are refusing to heed the word of God as Jesus proclaims it to them. Their rejection of him and his message shows that that they are children of the devil, are following his murderous mode, have nothing to do with the truth, and are “not of God.” They seek to kill Jesus (8:37), consider him to be demon-possessed (8:52), and prepare to put him to death by stoning (8:59). This mode of execution by group action was designated in Torah as appropriate for dealing with those guilty of blasphemy (Lev 4:15–16) or of encouraging the worship of other gods (Deut 13:6–10). It was to take place outside the city (Lev 24:10; Deut 17:5), with the criminal stripped of all clothing (Ezek 16:39), and was to be begun by having witnesses of the blasphemous claims throw the first stones, followed by the entire community (Deut 13:40). Since in both the synoptic tradition and in the oldest version of the words of institution of the Lord’ Supper (1 Cor 11:24; Mk 14:22) Jesus breaks the loaf,⁶ it is possible that historically, Jesus expected execution by the Jewish authorities on the charge of blasphemy, using their method of stoning. But in any case there seems to have been clearly an intention on their part to execute Jesus, although he was actually put to death by the Romans on a political charge.

The Letters of John deal directly with the issue of truth, making the emphatic point that those who claim to have fellowship with

⁶ Since a substantial portion of the manuscript tradition includes Jesus description of the broken loaf as symbolic of his body being broken, it is conceivable that he expected his execution to take place by the Jewish mode of stoning, rather than the Roman mode of crucifixion, which of course is what occurred.

Christ while walking in darkness “lie and do not live according to the truth” (1 John 6,8). One “who says, ‘I know him,’ but disobeys his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, but whoever keeps his word, in him truly love for God is perfected” (1 John 2:4–5). Conversely, “I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and know that no lie is of the truth” (2:21). Second John is addressed by “the elder, to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth, and not only I, but also all who know the truth, because of the truth which abides in us and will be with us forever” (2 John 1). In 3 John 3, there is a strong statement about truth as a way of life: “I greatly rejoiced when some of the brethren arrived and testified to the truth of your life, as indeed you do follow the truth.” Truth consists of guidelines for life, which are conformed to by the members of the community, not merely theological or ethical information. Response to this truth is decisive, as affirmed in 1 John 4:6–8: “We are of God: whoever knows God listens to us, and whoever is not of God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error”.

6. *Images and Resources of Truth for the New Community*

Many interpreters of the Gospel of John, including those who have employed existentialist categories for their exegesis, have pictured it as primarily concerned for the individual in his or her relation to God through Christ. But that assumption grossly distorts the imagery which pervades this Gospel. Instead, the many images present in this gospel represent the participation by the faith community in the new life that God has provided, and continues to provide, through Jesus Christ.

Those Who Receive the True Light (John 1:9–13; 8:12–59)

The first of the images of participation in the new people of God is light. Jesus is declared to be “the true light that enlightens every human [which] was coming into the world” (1:9–13). He came into the world—which was “made through him”—but was not recognized by the world as a whole, or by those in the earthly context into which he came. But to all who received him as the true light from God, he gave authority to become God’s children—a relationship based not on human descent or will, but on God’s will and

purpose. This new community becomes the dwelling place of God among his people, “full of grace and truth.” In the person of Christ the glorious presence of God is visible, in contrast to the divine cloud of glory which could be seen only by the high priest in the Most Holy Place in the temple (1:14).

Jesus identifies himself as the light of the world (8:12), affirms that he knows his divine source and destination (8:14), and declares that his critics know neither him nor the Father (8:19). Only after his opponents have “lifted him up” will they come to recognize who he is and that the source of his message and authority is God. This transforming gift of vision is symbolized when Jesus restores the sight of the man born blind (9:1–34). In response to the critics who seek to expel the man whose blindness was cured, Jesus tells him that his role is to differentiate between those who claim to see but are really blind and those who know their need for divine illumination, and are then enabled to see (9:38–41). It is with this range of meanings that Jesus declares, “I am the light of the world” (8:12).

Those among Whom the Word of God dwells (1:14)

As Terence F. Fretheim has noted in his fine essay on “Word of God” in the Old Testament,⁷ that the word of God is seen as a combination of speech and act, in which are conveyed both the divine purpose and the power to accomplish the announced goal. Hence, the word of God is the ground of trust and hope for God’s people, as addressed to specific situations and in preserving the divine order—from creation and down through their subsequent history. The word is effective through personal encounter, as conveyed by the prophets and is understood through verbal communication and interpretation by insightful individuals to the larger community. It is this renewing, fulfilling purpose of God for his people which has taken on human form—“became flesh and dwelt among us”—disclosing “the glory of God, full of grace and truth.” Jesus as Son of God has come among his people in human form and has revealed to them the glory which was earlier perceived as a radiant cloud visible only by the high priest in the inmost sanctuary of the temple. The nature and purpose of God are now fully visible in Jesus Christ: the grace and truth of God in a unique mode of divine radiance.

⁷ ABD 6.961–968.

And as such, he continues to “dwell among us”. The range of roles which Jesus performs to foster the life of the new community are set forth in the rest of this gospel.

Those Whose Sins are Taken Away and Who Perceive Jesus to Be the Messiah (1:29–34, 49–51)

John the Baptist, after predicting the coming of one from God who ranks before him declares that he is “the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,” upon whom the Spirit will descend and remain. He is the Son of God (1:29–34). One of those who heard John’s declaration, Andrew, reported to his brother—Simon Peter—that “we have found the Messiah” (1:40–42). As Jesus begins to gather his followers, Philip reports to Nathanael that they have found the one whose coming was predicted in the law and the prophets: Jesus of Nazareth. When Nathanael meets Jesus, who commends him for his freedom from guilt and mentions that he had seen him under a fig tree, he acclaims him as Son of God and king of Israel (1:45–49). Jesus then predicts that he will see heaven opened and the angels of God descending on him as the Son of Man (1:51). Thus a whole spectrum of messianic roles and titles are seen as appropriate for Jesus.

Those Who Share in the Love of God

A series of symbolic acts and roles of love are assigned to Jesus in John 2, 3, 4, and 6. The first of these is the wedding at Cana in Galilee (2:1–11) to which Jesus and his disciples were invited. Marital imagery is, of course, an important feature in both the legal and the prophetic traditions of Israel’s scriptures. In Ex 34 where the account of Moses’ renewing the covenant with Israel is offered, the resulting relationship between God and his people is depicted in terms of a marriage. Sexual relations are also used in this Jewish literature to picture infidelity to the true God, as when it is declared that the women from other tribes who are married to the sons of the Israelites will “make your sons also prostitute themselves to their gods.” In radical contrast, faithful marital relationship is the image for the true and proper relationship of the faithful within the new community. Preparation for the wedding feast here in John involves another symbol of the new reality when Jesus makes possible for the new community: the availability of new wine (2:1–11). In the Hebrew scriptures

wine is a sign and symbol of plenty and joy, although it also serves as a feature of violence, as in Jer 13:12–14 and Prov 4:17, and of divine punishment of the wicked (Psa 75:7–8). Abstinence from “wine or strong drink” is enjoined for those preparing for worship of Yahweh (Lev 10:8–9), and for those rebuilding the temple in the time of Ezra (Ezra 6:9). But it is also a sign of divine favor, both in the present (Deut 7:13; 11:14) and in the age to come (Deut 33:28; Psa 104:14–15). The symbolic meaning of this is evident in the word to the bridegroom, “You have kept the good wine until now!” (John 2:10). In John 3:1–21 the traditional Jewish hopes of the coming of the Son of Man and the kingdom of God and the appearance of the Son of God are perceived to be in process of fulfillment through Jesus. Those who will perceive the new rule of God in the world are those who trust in the “lifted up” Son of Man and hence have “come to the light” that is available through Jesus—in sharp contrast to the evil-doers who “hate the light.”

That this occurs at a wedding feast is significant in that marital love is an important feature in the prophetic and wisdom traditions of Israel. In Hosea, Israel’s having turned to idolatrous worship is described as marital infidelity. Pictured there are both (1) the divinely intended relation of faithfulness and devotion and (2) the judgment that is to fall on Israel for her infidelity (Hos 2). In radical departure from the Jewish conviction that the God of Israel dwells in the inner sanctuary of the temple in Jerusalem and from the belief of the northern tribes of Israel (which became known as the Samaritans) that God dwells in the sanctuary on their holy mountain, Gerizim, Jesus declares that the hour has come when true worship will be “in spirit and in truth”—not on either of these holy mountains (4:16–24). The basis for the authority of this pronouncement on his claim to be the Messiah is his assigning to himself the Greek equivalent of Yahweh, the Hebrew name of God: *ego eimi* = “I am.” Jesus Christ is now the locus of God’s presence among humans, and the focus of true worship. The testimony of the Samaritan woman to whom Jesus made this claim leads many Samaritans to listen to him and then to affirm that he is “indeed the Savior of the world” (4:42). Another mode of departure from dominant norms of Jewish piety and identity is recounted in 4:46–54, where an official in the service of King Herod asks Jesus to heal his dying son. Jesus tells him that his trust in Jesus has led to the healing of the son—which is confirmed when the official returns to his home. Thus there are no

ethnic or political limits to the outworking of the grace of God through Jesus. The true locus and focus for the worship of God is Jesus.

Those Who Share in the Bread from Heaven

The story of Jesus providing bread for feeding the multitude that had followed him to the mountain (6:1–14) recalls in many ways the story in Exodus 16 of Yahweh's provision of manna—bread from heaven for his pilgrim people, during their forty years of wandering in the wilderness before they reached their promised land. A jar of this was to be kept in their tent of meeting as a tangible reminder of God's care for his people. It is Peder Borgen, of course, who has written the most perceptive and enduringly significant study of the relationships between this feature of the Jewish scriptures and the New Testament—especially the Gospel of John.⁸ Borgen perceives that the author of this Gospel, like Philo of Alexandria, has utilized features of Jewish tradition that built on Stoic and Platonic philosophical traditions, and that one should not assume that what subsequently developed in rabbinic texts provided the background for this document and other early Christian writings. He shows the dual influence on Philo of (1) the encyclical tradition of the Greco-Roman world, which brought knowledge and insights through instruction from teachers, and (2) the individual study of philosophy, which brings intuitive wisdom, self-taught by nature. Philo's interpretation of manna as that wisdom which comes especially on the sabbath at the reading and expounding of the Law of Moses is paralleled most closely in John 6, where the manna is associated with the eucharistic meal of the church.⁹ Borgen goes on to show that bread from heaven is also identified in the fourth gospel with Jewish wisdom (cf. 6:35 with Sir 24:19, 21 and Prov. 9:5). This link is clearly evident in the similarity between the call of wisdom to "eat of me" in Sir 24: 21 and the pronouncement of Jesus in John 6:51 that "Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life." Partaking of Christ is, of course, implicit in his pronouncement of the claim

⁸ Peder Borgen, *Bread from Heaven: An Exegetical Study of the Concept of Manna in the Gospel of John and the Writings of Philo of Alexandria* (NovTSup 10; Leiden: Brill, 1965) 107.

⁹ Borgen, *Bread from Heaven* 114.

in 6:42, “I am the bread that came down from heaven,” and in the promise in 6:51, “Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the world is my flesh.”

Borgen notes that “In John the bread from heaven has been given the life-giving features of Torah and wisdom,” and that “the spiritual bread from heaven is identical with Jesus, the son of Joseph, a historical human being (“flesh and blood”), with whom the elected believers are united through the mediation of the eucharist and the words of Jesus.”¹⁰ Thus the major intent of the reworking of the gospel tradition in John is to define and depict the new community as the beneficiaries of the divinely-provided resources.

Sharing in the Kingdom of God

In contrast to the Synoptic Gospel tradition, where from the outset Jesus is reported as announcing the chronological imminence of the kingdom of God (Mark 1:15; Matt 4:17; Luke 9:27), in the Gospel of John entrance into the kingdom of God is seen as taking place at conversion and baptism under the image of new birth (John 3:1–5). The crucial factor for determining whether or not one shares in the life of the age to come is whether one trusts and obeys Jesus as God’s son who has come “from above” (3:31–36). It is he who has come from God, who speaks the words of God, and will establish God’s rule in the world.

The Locus of the True Worship of God

In response to Jesus’ remark to the Samaritan woman about the multiple husbands she has had, she raises the basic issue between Jews and Samaritans as to whether Jerusalem or Mt Gerizim in Samaria is the true place of worship. Jesus’ then declares that the time is coming when neither place will be appropriate for worship of God, since “true worshippers will worship the Father in Spirit and in truth” (4:24). The one true locus for those who seek to worship God is Jesus, who identifies himself to the woman as the Messiah (4:25). In response to her testimony concerning Jesus many of the Samaritans believed in him, attesting that “This is indeed the savior of the world” (4:42).

¹⁰ Borgen, *Bread from Heaven* 192.

The True Source of Learning (7:14–29)

Jesus is reported as teaching in the Jerusalem temple at the time of the Feast of Booths. This term, *sukkoth*, means “ingathering,” and was used in relation to Israel’s being taken into the promised land as well as the collection of the fruitful crops. The celebration took place for seven days in the seventh month when the harvest was gathered (Ex 23:16; 34:22; Lev 23:35–36; Deut 16:13–17). The people were to dwell in booths in commemoration of Israel’s extended stay in the wilderness (Num 23:33–42) where they were guided and from which they were ultimately delivered by God (Num 23:33–42). The feast was perceived by the prophet Zechariah (14:16) as a time of thanksgiving for God’s having enabled his people to withstand attacks by other nations and to continue to worship the Lord of Hosts—their true king—in the temple.

Jesus is pictured in 7:14–24 as confronting the Jewish leaders in the temple. He claims that God is the true ground of authority in his teaching, and that their claim to be obeying the Law of Moses is false. This is evident from their charge that his having healed a man on the sabbath was a violation of the law of God (7:21). He claims rather that his works and words are true: “He who sent me is true, and him you do not know” (7:28).

The True Shepherd for the True Flock of God’s People (10:1–18)

God as the shepherd and his people as his flock is a pervasive feature in the Old Testament, in writings included in the Septuagint and in post-biblical Jewish writings. The best known such text is Psa 23, which begins: “Yahweh is my shepherd,” thus designating God as the protector and supplier of his people. Although the term is not always used explicitly, the shepherd-like role of God is evident in his leading his people into a fertile land, as recounted in Deut 26:5–9. On the other hand, God’s punishment of his people for their infidelity is compared in Psa 44:11 with a shepherd giving up sheep for slaughter by other nations. The image of God as the shepherd of his people goes back to the patriarchal tradition, as when Jacob’s blessing of Joseph includes an acclaim to the God of his ancestors “who has been my shepherd all my life” (Gen 48:15). It is also significant in the prophets of Israel, who see God’s care of his people. This includes both the role of God and that of their leaders. In Jer 31:7–10, the Lord who punished Israel for disobedience will gather and keep them

as a flock. Isa 40:11 is a promise that God will feed his flock like a shepherd, will gather the lambs in his bosom, and will gently lead the mother sheep, who are producing new members of the community. In Jer 31:7–10 is a prophetic promise that God will gather his scattered people and care for them like a flock. A diverse feature of the Gospel of Matthew is evident in 15:24, where Jesus is reported as responding to a request by a Canaanite woman to heal her daughter by saying he was sent only to Jews—“to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

In the New Testament, the imagery of sheep and shepherd is widely used to portray the intended purpose of God for his people to be achieved through Jesus Christ. In all the strands of tradition in the gospels shepherd and flock are figures for portraying the role of Jesus in relation to the new community that is being called into existence and commissioned to serve the purpose of God. The community is also given counsel by the imagery of flock and shepherd concerning both the divine provision of care for the members and the responsibilities of its leaders. A major motif is seeking the lost sheep as a figure for the compassion that is to be shown toward the outsiders and the alienated—“the harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd” (Matt 9:36).¹¹ In Mark 6:34 when Jesus sees the throng that has gathered by the shore of the lake “he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd.”

The Q Parable of the Lost Sheep (Matt 18:10–14; Luke 15:3–7) pictures the shepherd who leaves the secure majority of his sheep to go out and search for the single lost one of his flock. In Matt 12:11 there is an account of one who violates the sabbath law by lifting a single lost sheep out of a pit into which it has fallen. Thus the condition of a single individual is seen as more important for Jesus than either the strict observation of the sabbath law or the pious behavior of the religious community as a whole. Jesus’ compassion for the throng that gathered to see and hear him is said to be his seeing them to be “like sheep without a shepherd” (Mark 6:34).

The image of Jesus as a shepherd takes on another important dimension in Mark 14:27–28, however, where he is reported as predicting his impending death in terms of the prophetic oracle in Zech 13:7 concerning the striking of the shepherd and the scattering of

¹¹ Similar themes are found in Mark 6:34 and Matt 10:16.

the flock, which is seen as an essential stage in preparation for the fulfillment of God's victory over the powers of evil. But they will gathered together—after his resurrection—when as their shepherd he “will go before you into Galilee.” The picture of Jesus as a sheep that is slaughtered, quoted from Isa 53:7, is repeated in the sermon of Philip in Acts 8:32.

A feature unique to the Gospel of Matthew is the declaration attributed to Jesus that he has been “sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Mt 10:6; 15:24). This declaration serves to confirm the image of the new people of God depicted in Matthew as the true Israel¹²—a theme which is developed in such features of Matthew as the five-fold literary structure (like the Torah or Pentateuch), the divine communication of the community rules on a mountain, and the constant references to the Old Testament which pervade the book.

Following the account of the rejection of Jesus by the Jewish authorities (Matt 26:1–5) and his trial before the *synedrion* (Matt 26:57–75), his sentencing to death, crucifixion, and the discovery of the empty tomb, Matthew ends with a call to reach out to “make disciples of all nations.” But the injunction is added that the members of the new community are “to observe all that I have commanded you” (Matt 28: 19–20). Thus Matthew consistently portrays Jesus as the new Moses who constitutes and instructs the new people of God.

The image of shepherd and flock for Jesus and his new people is expanded in the Gospel of John, where there are diverse images of the sheep and the shepherd for depicting Jesus and the new community. In John 10:1–6 Jesus describes the true shepherd as the only one who enters the sheepfold by the gate. His advent is prepared for by the gatekeeper, which is an image of those like John the Baptist whose message and summons to prepare for a new stage in God's forming his people serve as a mode of entrance into the community which Jesus is forming. It is Jesus who actually calls them into the sheepfold. Conversely, false claimants to leadership of God's people have come only to exploit and harm those seeking life in the new community. They have come only to kill and steal, while Jesus has come to give his life for the sheep. The new people of God will

¹² This understanding of the Gospel of Matthew is developed in my study, *Who Are the People of God? Early Christian Models of Community* (New Haven: Yale University, 1993), “The Law-Abiding Community” 88–120.

include those now regarded as outsiders—"other sheep, not of this fold" (10:16). They will share in this life because of Jesus' laying down his life for them, but he will "take it up again" (10:17).

Sharing in the Resurrection and the Life (11:17-27)

The occasion for this declaration of Jesus in which he identifies himself as "the resurrection and the life" (11:25)—the raising of Lazarus from the dead—has an ironic feature: his sister Mary is the one who was soon to prepare Jesus for death and burial by anointing his feet with a costly ointment (11:2; 12:3). Her sister Martha remarks when Jesus reaches them—following his intentional delay so that Lazarus would have died from his illness (11:6)—that if he had been there, her brother would not have died, implying that Jesus could have cured him. She has confidence that God will respond to Jesus' prayer for him and that he will be raised in the future day of resurrection. Jesus responds by declaring that those who trust in him will never die (11:25). Mary repeats the declaration that Jesus could have prevented Lazarus' death (11:31-32), as do some of the Jews (11:36-37). The shared belief that the bodies of the dead will be raised in the resurrection is implicit in Martha's expression of concern that there would be an odor coming from Lazarus' dead body (11:39). Instead, Jesus tells her that right belief will reveal the glory of God—not the smell of a corpse. Jesus' prayer for the disclosure of God's glory is followed by the appearance of Lazarus—his identity confirmed by the burial wrappings from which he must—literally and symbolically—be set free (11:44). The hostile reaction of the Jewish leaders (11:43-52) is based on their fear that the continuance of such miracles by Jesus will result in hostile action by the Romans, including destruction of the sacred site and the Jewish nation. Again there is an ironic feature: the declaration of the high priest that it is expedient that one man should die for the people and that the whole nation should not perish. This is understood to be a prophecy that the death of Jesus would benefit not only the Jewish "nation" but would also bring into the one new people of God those who are "scattered abroad." The hostile response of the leaders stirs them to plot how to have Jesus put to death—which is to result in the fulfillment of the divine scheme for renewal of the inclusive covenant people.

The Fulfillment of God's Promise to Israel of a King who Comes in the Name of the Lord (12:12–19)

Expanding on the pronouncement of the divine blessedness of “the one who comes in the name of the Lord” (Psa 118:26), who is now identified as “the King of Israel” (12:13), this prediction is combined with one in Zech 9:9, where it is asserted that the king who will come “triumphant and victorious” to God’s people (here identified as “the daughter of Zion”) will arrive—not on the traditional white horse of a victorious ruler, but “sitting on an asses’ colt.” This is in contrast to the image in Isa 33:4 of God’s coming in vengeance or in Isa 40:10, where “the Lord God comes in might and his arm rules for him,” although it is compatible with the picture in Isa 40:11 of God’s feeding and loving care for the flock. The result of the appearing of this commanding ruler will be “peace to the nations” and “dominion from sea to sea and . . . to the ends of the earth.”

The Inclusive Community (12:20–13:1)

Among the worshippers at the feast in Jerusalem are “some Greeks” who tell one of the disciples with a Greek name, Philip, that they want to see Jesus. He and another disciple with a Greek name, Andrew, notify Jesus of the wish of these Gentiles. Jesus’ response is a declaration that a major moment has come in the outworking of God’s plan for the bringing to humanity of a new mode of granting eternal life through him. This will involve Jesus’ death but will lead to his glorification as Son of Man. Those who share in these divinely-provided benefits must divest themselves of love for life in the present world and thereby qualify for sharing in eternal life. Jesus does not ask to escape from the death he is soon to experience (12:27–28), since he must fulfill this role of suffering, which will lead to the glorifying of the name of God, but also to the judgment of this world and the casting out of its ruler. His destiny of being “lifted up” has a dual significance: his death will be by being lifted up on the cross, but the final outcome will be exaltation as Lord and the overcoming of the powers of darkness. The light to perceive this truth is already available: those who trust in it will “become children of light” (12:36). His critical opponents are not persuaded—a negative response which confirms the prophecy of Isaiah 53:1 and is seen as the result of divine judgment (12:39–40)—but other Jewish leaders are convinced, although some are reluctant to make public

confession out of fear that this will lead to expulsion from the synagogue and denunciation by the Jewish leaders (12:42–43).

In sharp contrast to this hostile reaction Jesus then proclaims the potential for wide human response of faith to him and his message, and the divine confirmation which will thereby result (12:44–50). Those who trust in him are in reality trusting in the God who sent him, and those who so perceive him are in fact discerning that it is God who has sent him. His role as one who brings light into the world invites faith and obedience from all who hear his message, and will deliver from darkness those who hear and keep what he says. His word will provide the basis for judgment for those who reject it, but his aim is to save, not to condemn, and is based on what he has been commissioned by God to do and to say—a message which enables the faithful hearers to share in eternal life. His aim is to save the world, not to condemn it (12:47), and what he says is the truth which he speaks “just as the Father has told me” (12:50).

Basic to the role that God has commissioned Jesus to fulfill is, of course, his death, resurrection and ascension. He now knows that “the hour has come” for him to depart from this world and go to the Father (13:1). In both the synoptic and the Johannine tradition there is a shift from the earlier stage of Jesus’ career when he does not know “the hour” when this divine program is to come to its climax in his death and resurrection to the later stage when “the hour has come.”

The Role of the Servant (13:1–20)

Jesus’ knowledge of his impending departure from this world and his exaltation to be with the Father, in spite of the devil’s use of Judas’ betrayal of Jesus to effect his death, is in ironic contrast with his demonstration of his love for his followers by taking on the lowly role of a servant by washing their feet. The reaction of Peter objecting to this servile act of Jesus manifests multiple misunderstanding: when told that it is essential for Jesus to wash his feet he asks to have his feet, hands and head washed. Jesus responds to this by telling him that one who has been bathed does not need to be washed, except for his feet, but is entirely clean. On the other hand, there is one member of the group who is not clean: Judas, who will betray him to the authorities. (13:10, 21; cf. Ps 41:9). The favorable

responses that the disciples will receive are signs of a receptive attitude toward Jesus and God: "Him who sent me" (13:20). Thus the mutual love of the community, which is exemplified by their washing the feet of one another is to be a central feature of their shared life, for which Jesus is the model.

True Obedience (13:21–38)

Before the central teaching of Jesus about his own impending death and the consequent glory of God that will be thereby disclosed, Jesus foretells his betrayal through the traitorous participant in their common meal: Judas. Ironically, it is after this traitor receives his share of the broken bread of the last supper that Satan takes control of him and is told by Jesus to fulfill quickly his plot with the pagan powers. That Jesus explains that his seeming defeat will result in his glorification by God as the Son of Man and his departure to a place where they may not go. Clearly, this is into the presence of God. But now he gives them an explicit "new commandment" (13:34–35), which he will soon repeat to them in a fuller form (15:12–17). The essence of this commandment is that they love one another, just as he has loved them. The climactic manifestation of this love will be his death on the cross for them and his subsequent resurrection from the dead. These events will manifest God's love and glorious purpose to renew and transform his people. The appropriateness of the disciples' sharing in this divine disclosure will be their subsequent living in accord with this new commandment (13:25). The potential for human perversion of this commandment is evident when Peter declares his willingness to lay down his life for Christ, but Jesus informs him of the denials of relation to Christ that are soon to come from this boastful disciple (13:36–38).

The True Way to God: Access to Truth and Life (14:1–31; 15:26–16:24)

After promising his followers that there will be an ultimate place for them to dwell in the "Father's house," to which Jesus is now going to go and prepare, he promises to return and guide them on the way. The "way" is not to be perceived as an earthly, physical route, but as a present access to God which is open and discernible through trust in Jesus and the works which he is divinely enabled to perform. Confirmation that he embodies the way to God will take the form of (1) works which his followers will be able to perform; (2)

positive response to requests to God made in the name of Jesus; (3) visible evidence of their obedience to his commandment to love; and (4) the powerful, enduring presence of the counselor—the Holy Spirit, whose multiple roles within God’s people are described above, and will include testimony to Jesus (15:26–27), the divine support in the face of hostility by the Jewish leaders, challenges to their unbelief (16:1–41), and the guidance of God’s people “into all truth” (16:12–15). The Spirit’s support will continue during the time of pain and distress that they will experience, and will be evident in God’s answers to prayers in the name of Jesus (16:16–24).

Those Who Share in the True Vine (15:1–27)

The image of God’s people as a cultivated, fruitful vine appears in both the prophetic and wisdom traditions of Israel. In Jer 2:21 Israel’s failure to live in obedience to God is compared with the degeneration of a “choice vine of the purest stock” into a “wild vine.” In Ezekiel 15 Israel is compared with a useless vine, with “the land desolate, because they have acted faithlessly” (15:8). In Psalm 80 there is an appeal to Yahweh, who brought Israel out of Egypt and planted it in its land to “have regard for this vine” (80:14). In John 15 Jesus is the true vine, and the Father is the vine-grower. Those who maintain vital relationship with Christ will produce fruit: love and obedience to Christ’s commands, to the point of willingness to die for others (15:12–17). These are called to remain faithful in spite of rejection by the Jewish leaders. The Spirit who is coming will convince the world of its evil, especially its rejection of Jesus as the Christ (16:5–11), and will guide the faithful into “all truth”—glorifying Christ, clarifying his message, and informing the faithful concerning “the things that are to come.”

Assurance of Christ’s Victory over the World (16:25–33)

A central feature in these coming events is the triumphant return of Christ. And in the time of suffering by the faithful before that event they will be informed and sustained, and their petitions in Jesus name will be answered. As they experience the love of God they will be granted peace even during persecution, since they will remain confident of Jesus’ claim: “I have overcome the world” (16:25–33).

Confirmation of the Promise of Eternal Life (17:1–26)

The promise of eternal life through Christ is confirmed by his prayer in 17:1–25. The outcome of the authority granted to Jesus and the assurance that eternal life will indeed be granted to his people is the transforming experience that will now be theirs. He prays that those who trust in him “may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent (17:4). Jesus has revealed God and his purpose to the new faithful people so that they now “know the truth” that he came from God (17:8). He prays that they may be protected from the hostile powers of evil, that all of them may be preserved and made holy through the word which they have received and which they will declare to others—who will thereby become members of the new community (17:12–19).

Thus the world will be informed concerning the truth that Jesus has been sent by God, that his people in all their diversity are one, and that they will share his love and glory (17:20–24). They will know and experience God’s love. As Christ’s promise is reported in 8:31–32: “If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”

DUALISM IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL AND THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS: A REASSESSMENT OF THE PROBLEM

David E. Aune

1. *Introduction*

Evaluating the light that the Dead Sea Scrolls have shed on the interpretation of the Gospel and Letters of John is just one aspect of the complex historical and cultural background of these very complex texts. That is to say that the discovery and publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls during the last fifty years supplements, but does not replace, the value of other Jewish and Hellenistic texts for understanding the *Corpus Johanneum* in its historical context. In the first decade after the discovery and availability of some of the texts of the Dead Sea Scrolls, many scholars thought that these new manuscript discoveries provided the crucial key for unlocking important aspects of the meaning of Johannine literature. In 1955, Millar Burrows made the following observation:¹

The whole manner of thinking and the literary style of the fourth Evangelist are strikingly like what we find in the Qumran texts.

This judgment is amplified by Frank Moore Cross:²

Linguistic and conceptual contacts between the scrolls and the New Testament are nowhere more in evidence than in the Gospel of John.

Commentators from the 1950's until today have continued to give a generally positive assessment of the value of the Dead Sea Scrolls for understanding the conceptual world and background of the Fourth Gospel.³ Schnackenburg in particular refers to hundreds of passages

¹ Millar Burrows, *The Dead Sea Scrolls* (New York: Viking, 1955) 338.

² Frank Moore Cross, Jr., *The Ancient Library of Qumran* (rev. ed.; Garden City: Doubleday, 1961) 206.

³ See Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, AB 29, 29A (2 vols.; Garden City: Doubleday, 1966-70) 1:lxii-lxiv; Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel*

in the Dead Sea Scrolls throughout his commentary.⁴ By the last quarter of the 20th century even some of the initial excitement and optimism shared by the majority began to fade. In the second edition of his commentary on the Gospel of John (1978), C. K. Barrett observed with typical British understatement:⁵

Now that the excitement of the first discoveries is past it is possible to see that Qumran has not revolutionized the study of John.

Ernst Haenchen cites just fourteen texts from the Dead Sea Scrolls in his 1980 commentary on John, ten of which are used to explain part of the background of John 4:23 in terms of the Qumran community's conceptions of the Holy Spirit.⁶

Of course, this optimism was not universally shared. As early as 1960, Howard Teeple had carefully detailed the numerous dissimilarities between the Fourth Gospel and the Dead Sea Scrolls, disputing the exaggerated claims for a close contextual relationship.⁷ More recently, Richard Bauckham has argued convincingly that the parallels between the Fourth Gospel and Qumran do not justify the hypotheses of influence or historical connection which have been put forward.⁸

2. *Methodological Considerations*

In view of the fact that the comparative method is the basis for establishing the Qumran literature as a valid background against which to understand certain theological emphases in the Fourth Gospel, some preliminary methodological observations are in order.

according to St John, 3 vols. (New York: Herder and Herder, 1968) 1.128–35; George R. Beasley-Murray, *John*. WBC 36 (Waco: Word Books, 1987) lxi–lxiii; D. Moody Smith, *John* (ANTC; Nashville: Abingdon, 1999) 34–5.

⁴ Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St John*, 3 vols. (New York: Herder and Herder, 1968; New York: Crossroad, 1980–82).

⁵ C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel According to St. John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text*. Second ed. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1978) 34.

⁶ Ernst Haenchen, *John: A Commentary on the Gospel of John* (2 vols.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984) 1:223.

⁷ Howard M. Teeple, "Qumran and the Origin of the Fourth Gospel," *NovT* 4 (1960–61) 6–25.

⁸ Richard Bauckham, "Qumran and the Fourth Gospel: Is There a Connection?" *The Scrolls and the Scriptures: Qumran Fifty Years After*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and Craig A. Evans (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997) 267–79.

First, the establishment of general parallels at the phenomenological level is relatively simple, while the establishment of actual borrowing is much more difficult. Richard Frye has therefore proposed three categories of possible influence:⁹ (1) general beliefs, (2) motif similarity (not only are general beliefs similar, but the details of those beliefs are also similar), and (3) the similarity of specific terminology. Only influences established at the third level are considered legitimate basis for proving that borrowing has actually taken place.

Second, the comparison of two complex socio-cultural phenomena is artificial to the extent that many other related phenomena are omitted, thereby skewing comparisons. In line with this observation, I will broaden the comparative basis by bringing into the discussion texts from other bodies of early Jewish and early Christian literature, including the Johannine letters.¹⁰

Third, since the links between the Essenes, Khirbet Qumrân and the Dead Sea Scrolls remain a debated issue,¹¹ none of the arguments in this paper is dependent on assuming that the Essenes are the authors of the Qumran literature, even though I think that the arguments connecting the Essenes, Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls are quite compelling. In line with this observation, I will refrain from entering into the game of speculating whether or not the Fourth Evangelist was an Essene.

⁹ Richard N. Frye, "Qumran and Iran: The State of Studies," *Christianity, Judaism and Other Greco-Roman Cults: Studies for Morton Smith at Sixty*, ed. Jacob Neusner (4 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 1975) 167–73.

¹⁰ A variety of texts which reflect a dualistic theology similar to 1QS 3.13–4.26 and the Fourth Gospel are considered by James H. Charlesworth, "A Critical Comparison of the Dualism in 1QS 3:13–4:26 and the 'Dualism' Contained in the Gospel of John," *John and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (New York: Crossroad, 1990) 96–7.

¹¹ In a recent book by Lena Cansdale, *Qumran and the Essenes: A Re-evaluation of the Evidence* (TSAJ 60; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1997), the author argues that the Essenes could not be the people for whom the Dead Sea Scrolls were written, nor was Qumran the principal dwelling place of the Essenes. On the other hand, Gabriele Boccaccini, *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis: The Parting of the Ways between Qumran and Enochic Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) proposes that what ancient historians called Essenism includes not only the Qumran community but what modern scholars call Enochic Judaism. In a recent review of the evidence, James C. VanderKam concludes that the Essene identification of the Qumran community is the dominant view, though there are opponents to this position; see his "Identity and History of the Community," *The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment*, ed. P. W. Flint and J. C. VanderKam (2 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 1998–1999) 2.487–533.

Fourth, since it is clear that not all of the literature found in the Qumran caves was produced by a single sectarian group, it is invalid to assume that the Qumran literature constitutes a homogenous collection. Nevertheless there is a core group of documents which are widely regarded as both sectarian and related (1QS, 1QSa 1QSB, 1QH, 1QM, CD and the pesharim). Further, the fact that many of the sectarian documents are compilations means that they reflect the development of the community during a 200-year period. In line with this observation, naive thematic syntheses need to be avoided.¹²

Fifth, it is not my intention to attempt to reconstruct the theological views of the Qumran community in order to compare them with the theology of the Fourth Gospel, but rather will focus on the comparison of specific *texts*, rather than the comparison of hypothetical constructs.

Sixth, the quest for ultimate origins, such as determining whether the cosmic dualism of 1QS 3.13–4.26 was influenced by Iranian dualism or was derived from the Old Testament, is a fascinating but essentially irrelevant issue for the limited purpose of this paper.¹³

3. *The Problem of Dualism*

One of the more striking features of the Gospel of John, particularly when compared to the Synoptic Gospels, is the pervasive presence of a cosmological dualism frequently understood in ethical categories.¹⁴ Since this type of dualism has no clear antecedents in

¹² The work of Sekki, *RUAH*, represents just such a naive thematic study which treats the Qumran literature homogeneously and ignores all problems relating to genre and source criticism.

¹³ See David Winston, "The Iranian Component in the Bible, Apocrypha and Qumran: A Review of the Evidence," *HR* 5 (1966) 183–216; Jacob Neusner, "Jews and Judaism under Iranian Rule: Bibliographical Reflections," *History of Religions* 8 (1968) 159–77.

¹⁴ There is an extensive bibliography on this subject: Lucretia Mowry, "The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Background for the Gospel of John," *BA* 17 (1954) 78–97; Raymond E. Brown, "The Qumran Scrolls and the Johannine Gospel and Epistles," *CBQ* 17 (1955) 403–419, 559–74, reprinted in Krister Stendahl (ed.), *The Scrolls and the New Testament* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957) 183–207; H. W. Huppenbauer, *Der Mensch zwischen zwei Welten: Der Dualismus der Texte von Qumran (Höhle I) und der Damaskusfragmente. Ein Beitrag zur Vorgeschichte des Evangeliums* (ATANT 34. Zürich: Zwingli Verlag, 1959); W. F. Albright, "Recent Discoveries in Palestine and the Gospel of St. John," *The Background of the New Testament and Its Eschatology*, ed. W. D. Davies and D. Daube (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1964) 153–71; Otto

Judaism, the argument goes, scholars looked elsewhere for the sources of such a view, chiefly Platonic thought and Gnosticism.¹⁵

Since the term “dualism” can be understood in many ways, it is important to clarify the understanding of dualism which informs this paper. As a religio-historical phenomenon, dualism involves the existence of two antithetical causal principles underlying the existence of the world.¹⁶ Pairs of opposites, such as light and darkness, good and bad, spirit and matter, right and left, male and female, are only dualistic insofar as they involve the duality or polarity of such causal principles. Bianchi proposes a typology of dualism which consists of radical dualism versus moderate dualism (two coequal and coeternal principles versus one eternal principle from which a second is somehow derived), dialectical versus eschatological dualism (two irreducible principles function eternally versus the ultimate elimination of the evil principle at the end of history), and cosmic versus anti-cosmic dualism (creation is fundamentally good and evil comes from the outside versus the view that evil is intrinsic to the world and present as a negative principle or substance).

4. *Johannine Dualism*

The basic structure of Johannine dualism involves the existence of two worlds, or two planes of being, which are designated in simple spatial terms in John 8:23 as “above” (τὰ ἄνω) and “below” (τὰ

Böcher, *Der johanneische Dualismus im Zusammenhang des nachbiblischen Judentums* (Gütersloh: Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn, 1965); Jürgen Becker, “Beobachtungen zum Dualismus im Johannesevangelium,” *ZNW* 65 (1974) 71–87; James H. Charlesworth, “A Critical Comparison of the Dualism in 1QS 3:13–426 and the ‘Dualism’ Contained in the Gospel of John,” *NTS* 15 (1969) 389–418; reprinted in *John and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (New York: Crossroad, 1990) 76–106; John Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991) 205–237.

¹⁵ After a detailed consideration of the various possible background to the Fourth Gospel, C. H. Dodd emphasizes the many similarities between Johannine and Hellenistic thought (*The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* [Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1953] 133): “He [the Fourth Evangelist] is well aware of the teaching of Rabbinic Judaism, but only partly sympathetic to it. He is more sympathetically in touch with Hellenistic Judaism as represented by Philo. Like Philo himself, he is in contact with the higher pagan thought of the time, as represented to us by the Hermetic literature.” Rudolf Bultmann, on the other hand, thought that the Johannine discourses revealed the influence of Gnosticism as well as a reaction against Gnosticism in *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971).

¹⁶ Ugo Bianchi, “Dualism,” *Encyclopedia of Religion* 4:506.

κάτω), correlated with the explanatory phrases “not of this world” and “of this world”: “He said to them, ‘You are from below, I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world.’”¹⁷ The verbs ἀναβαίνειν and καταβαίνειν are correlated with τὰ ἄνω and τὰ κάτω and describe the movement from the upper world to the lower world by the revealer who has descended from the heavenly world and will ultimately return (3:13; 6:62; 20:17). ἄνωθεν (“from above”),¹⁸ a synonym of τὰ ἄνω, occurs in John 3:31, where it is parallel to the phrase “from heaven,” both of which mean “from God”:¹⁹ “He who comes from above [ἄνωθεν] is above all; he who is of the earth belongs to the earth, and of the earth he speaks; he who comes from heaven is above all.” These two dualities, τὰ ἄνω and τὰ κάτω (8:23) and ἄνωθεν and ἐκ τῆς γῆς (3:31), correspond to the characteristically Jewish duality of σὰρξ and πνεῦμα (3:6; cf. 1:13), a duality wherein πνεῦμα replaces the more characteristic Hellenistic νοῦς.²⁰ The phrase ὁ κόσμος οὗτος, “this world” is more common, occurring some eight times (8:23; 9:39; 11:9; 12:25, 31; 13:1; 16:11; 18:36), and even though the Hebrew word *‘olam* (Aramaic *‘alam*) can be translated “age” as well as “world,” the phrase ὁ κόσμος οὗτος in the Fourth Gospel is clearly appropriate in the context of Johannine theology, since it reflects a spatial rather than an eschatological dualism presupposed by the phrase ὁ αἰὼν οὗτος (as in Matt 12:32; Luke 16:8; Gal 1:4; Rom 12:2). While the two realms are antithetical, yet the world which rejects Jesus is also the world to which he came as savior.²¹ Even though God created everything through the Logos

¹⁷ C. K. Barrett suggests that this contrast between an upper and a lower world complements the more typically Jewish contrast between the present world and the world to come, and is an essentially Platonic distinction (*The Gospel According to St. John* [2nd ed.; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1978] 35).

¹⁸ ἄνωθεν can have either a temporal meaning, such as “again” or “from the beginning,” or a local meaning “from above,” but here must mean “from above” as the parallelism with “from heaven” indicates.

¹⁹ Barnabas Lindars, *The Gospel of John* (London: Michael, Morgan & Scott, 1972) 169.

²⁰ C. H. Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1953) 258. For a discussion of the pervasive character of the σὰρξ/πνεῦμα dichotomy in Judaism and its profound influence on Pauline anthropology, see Daniel Boyarin, *A Radical Jew: Paul and the Politics of Identity* (Berkeley: University of California, 1994) 57–85.

²¹ Robert T. Fortna, *The Fourth Gospel and Its Predecessor: From Narrative Source to Present Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988) 263.

(1:3), so that the basic form of dualism in the Fourth Gospel is a modified or softened dualism, the world is now alienated from God and under the domination of the “ruler of this world” whose domination was apparently broken with the crucifixion of Jesus (12:31; 14:30; 16:11).²² John 17:15 refers to Satan as ὁ πονηρός, “the Evil One,” and according to 1 John 5:19, “the whole world lies in the power of the Evil One” (cf. 1 John 2:13, 14; 3:12; 5:18).²³ This evil counterpart to God is also called “Satan,” who is able to “enter into” Judas (13:27), and also the “Devil,” who was earlier able to sow the idea of betraying Jesus “into the heart” of Judas (13:2), who for this reason is called a “devil” by Jesus much earlier in the narrative (6:70). Perhaps the most significant use of the term “Devil” is Jesus’ claim that his opponents are “of your father the Devil” (8:44). Since the various aliases “ruler of this world,” “Satan,” and “Devil” are designations for a personal being, there is no compelling reason to follow Charlesworth’s conclusion that “the devil in John is not fundamentally a hypostatic creature,” or that he has been demythologized.²⁴ Rather, John’s program of realized eschatology has moved the defeat of Satan from the end of the present age to the event of the exaltation of Jesus. It is therefore correct to say that the modified dualism of the Fourth Gospel is also an eschatological dualism in the sense that the primary opponent of God is ultimately defeated (12:31; 16:11).

²² The title ὁ ἄρχων τοῦ κόσμου is also used as designation for Satan or Belial elsewhere in early Jewish and early Christian literature (*T. Sol.* 2:9; 3:5–6; 6:1; *Ascen. Isa.* 1:3; 2:4; 10:29). In *Barn.* 18:2, Satan is called “the ruler of the present time of iniquity.” Ignatius uses several aliases for the evil one, including “Satan” (*Eph.* 13:1) and “Devil” (*Eph.* 10:3; *Trall.* 8:1; *Rom.* 5:3; *Smyrn.* 9:1), but he clearly prefers the title ὁ ἄρχων τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου, “the prince of this age” (*Eph.* 17:1; 19:1; *Magn.* 1:2; *Trall.* 4:2; *Rom.* 7:1; *Philad.* 6:2), which may reflect the same tradition found in the Fourth Gospel, since the Hebrew word *‘olam* (Aramaic *‘alam*) can be translated either “world” or “age.” See D. E. Aune, “ARCHON,” *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, ed. K. van der Toorn, B. Becking and P. W. van der Horst (2nd ed.; Leiden: Brill, 1999) 82–85.

²³ In Matt 13:19, “the evil one” is a designation for Satan (in the Synoptic parallels, Mark 4:15 has “Satan,” while Luke 8:12 has “the devil”), who snatches away the seed of the word of the kingdom sown in the heart of one who does not understand it.

²⁴ Charlesworth, “Critical Comparison” 93.

One of the more striking dualities of the Fourth Gospel is the fundamental contrast between light and darkness, which is first introduced through a midrashic interpretation of the brief narrative of God's creation of light and its separation from darkness in Gen 1:2–5 in John 1:5: "The light shines in darkness and the darkness has not overcome it." This refers to the light of revelation which is brought to a world of darkness by Jesus. The followers of Jesus do not walk in darkness, but in the light (8:12; 12:46; 1 John 4:7), while those who refuse to accept Jesus belong to the realm of darkness (3:19–21; 12:35). The expressions "to walk in the light" (1 John 1:7) and "to walk in darkness" (12:35) are complex metaphors which refer on the one hand to belief in Jesus and a life characterized by obedience to the will of God, and on the other hand, to the rejection of belief in Jesus and a life characterized by immoral behavior. Light and darkness are also used as metaphors for the realms of good and evil, reflected, for example, in John 8:12:

I am the light of the world.
He who follows after me, will not walk in darkness,
but will have the light of life.

There are similar parallels in texts associated with early Christian Gnosticism, such as Gospel of Thomas logion 24:

There is light within a man of light,
and he lights up the whole world.
If he does not shine, he is darkness.

We must now ask how humanity is affected by the modified dualistic theology of the Fourth Gospel,²⁵ and to answer this question we must consider recent discussions of the self-understanding and self-definition of the Johannine community. The Fourth Evangelist implies that the human world lies in darkness (1:5; 3:19; 12:46), though he does not explain how this situation came about, nor does

²⁵ This question is dealt with directly in Charlesworth, "Critical Comparison" 91–92. The recent monograph by Christina Urban, despite its promising title, sheds little light on this question: *Das Menschenbild nach dem Johannevangelium: Grundlagen johanneischer Anthropologie*, WUNT 2.137 (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2001). Urban invokes passages from 1QS 3.13–4.26 only for the light they shed on early Jewish "satanology" (pp. 383–7).

he disclose how Satan became the “ruler of this world” (12:31; 14:30; 16:11) or (in the words of another Johannine writer, how it is that “the whole world is in the power of the evil one” (1 John 5:19). Those who believe in the light (i.e., believe in Jesus) are called “sons of light” (though only in 12:36),²⁶ a self-designation used by members of the Qumran community of themselves (1QS 1.9; 2.16; 3.13, 14, 25; 1QM 1.1, 3, 9, 11, 13). The Paraclete, or Spirit of Truth, is said to be both “with” and “in” the disciples (14:16–17). “The world” hated Jesus and it will also hate the followers of Jesus (15:18–19).

The contrast between this ethical dualism of light and darkness has a parallel in the dualistic language of conversion,²⁷ found in both early Christian and early Jewish texts, language which explicitly or implicitly alludes to the cosmological language of Gen 1:2–5. In Christian contexts the motif may well be used in baptismal homilies. One example is Acts 26:18, where the heavenly Jesus commissions Saul to go to the Gentiles, “to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.” Here “from darkness to light” is parallel to “from the power of Satan to God.” Since the last phrase reflects the basic form of moderate cosmic dualism frequently occurring in early Christian literature, the first phrase represents the impact which this cosmic dualism has at the level of the salvation of the individual, who participates in the cosmic struggle between God and Satan when he or she is converted. Very similar conversion language occurs in Col 1:12–13, where the cosmic force of evil is conquered by believers who are transferred to the sphere of light:

Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. He has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

²⁶ Luke 16:8 juxtaposes “the sons of this age” with “the sons of light,” thus using these two Semitic idioms to refer to a clear division of humanity into two opposing factions in the present time. Paul addresses the Thessalonian Christians as “sons of light and sons of the day,” and goes on to say that “we [the sons of light] are not of the night nor of darkness” (1 Thess 5:5), indicating the prevalence of this type of dualistic language in “Christianity” during the first half of the first century.

²⁷ Hans Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987) 211; *idem*, *TDNT* 9:325, 332, 356.

The allusion to Gen 1:2–5 is explicit in 2 Cor 4:6:

For it is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Similarly, 1 *Clem* 59:2 speaks of God's beloved child Jesus Christ, "through whom he called us from darkness to light, from ignorance to the full knowledge of the glory of his name." Here "darkness to light" symbolizes the move from "ignorance to full knowledge." In Eph 5:8 we read: "For once you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light," and according to 1 Pet 2:9, the Christians addressed in this letter are God's own people "that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." An early Jewish text which uses the same dualistic conversion metaphor is *Joseph and Aseneth* 8:9, the opening lines of prayer said on the occasion of Aseneth's conversion to Judaism:

Lord God of my father Israel, the Most High, the Powerful One of Jacob, who gave life to all (things) and called them from the darkness to the light, and from error to truth, and from death to life; you, Lord, bless this virgin. . . .

Again, in *T. Gad* 5:7 (trans. Hollander and de Jonge), we find the darkness = ignorance and the light = knowledge equations:²⁸

For godly and true repentance destroys ignorance and drives away darkness, and it enlightens the eyes and gives knowledge to the soul, and it leads the disposition to salvation.

A different use of the dualistic language of light and darkness occurs in 1 Enoch 41:8, though here also the allusion to the cosmological language of Gen 1:2–5 is still explicit:

For the shining sun makes many revolutions, for a blessing and for a curse, and the path of the journey of the moon (is) for the righteous light, for the sinner darkness, in the name of the Lord who has created (a division) between light and darkness, and has divided the spir-

²⁸ See also *Joseph and Aseneth* 15.12; Philo *De Abr.* 70.

its of men, and has established the spirits of the righteous in the name of his righteousness.

The duality of darkness-light is also used metaphorically to describe the present existence of Christians in the world, often in the context of parenesis. Such eschatological oriented parenetical material is found in Rom 13:12–14:

¹²The night is far gone, the day is at hand. Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. ¹³Let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day, not reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. ¹⁴But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Here “night” and “day” are metaphors for this age, to be succeeded shortly by the age to come.²⁹ The “works of darkness” represent sinful behavior, while “the armor of light” refers to the divine resources available to Christians to withstand evil. A similar use of the darkness-light duality in the context of eschatological parenesis is found in 1 Thess 5:4–5, 8:

⁴But you are not in darkness, brethren, for that day to surprise you like a thief. ⁵For you are all sons of light and sons of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. . . . ⁸But, since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.

In *T. Levi* 19:1, in a parenetic context lacking any eschatological features, the darkness-light duality is correlated with a cosmological dualism (trans. Hollander and de Jonge): “Choose, therefore, for yourselves either darkness or light, either the law of the Lord or the works of Beliar.”

²⁹ C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (2 vols.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1979) 2:682.

5. *Dualism in Qumran Literature*

One of the most intensively investigated passages in Qumran literature is the so-called "Treatise on the Two Spirits" in 1QS 3.13–4.26, where there is a relatively full delineation of the origin and function of the two spirits.³⁰ In addition to 1QS, twelve other copies of the Rule have been identified (4QS^a = 4Q255, 4QS^b = 4Q256, 4QS^c = 4Q257, 4QS^d = 4Q258, 4QS^e = 4Q259, 4QS^f = 4Q260, 4QS^g = 4Q261, 4QS^h = 4Q262, 4QSⁱ = 4Q263, 4QS^j = 4Q264, 5Q11, 5Q13. Frag. 3 of 4QS^a = 4Q255 has terms which refer to the doctrine of the two spirits in 1QS 3.13–4.26, but the wording of this text has no direct parallel in 1QS 3.13–4.26 and very likely represents a divergent tradition of that section.³¹ 4QS^d and 4QS^e, apparently representing an earlier form of the Rule, do not have 1QS 1–4. The twelve fragments of 4QS^b = 4Q256 preserve parallel texts to all the main parts of 1QS except 3.13–4.26,³² and one piece of fragment 2 of 4QS^c = 4Q257 has a parallel to 1QS 4.4–10.³³ Philip Alexander has proposed that the Rule existed in three recensions,³⁴ attesting to the crucial importance which this text had for the community during its history. Sarianna Metso, unaware of Alexander's study (which probably appeared too late for her to consult), produced an analysis which differs in significant ways from that of Alexander. Metso identifies three recensions, A (4QS^e = 4Q259), B (4QS^b = 4Q256; 4QS^d = 4Q258), which were combined to form C (1QS), which was expanded to form D (in 1QS 7–8).³⁵ She concludes that "there never existed a single, legitimate and up-to-date version of the Community Rule. The community continued copying the older and shorter form of the text even when a more extensive version was already available."³⁶ This manuscript evidence suggests

³⁰ For a survey of the interpretation of 1QS 3.13–4.26, see A. E. Sekki, *The Meaning of RUAH at Qumran* (SBLDS 110; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989) 7–69.

³¹ The most complete discussion of all the fragments relating to 1QS is Sarianna Metso, *The Textual Development of the Qumran Community Rule*, STDJ, 21 (Leiden: Brill, 1997).

³² Metso, *Textual Development* 22.

³³ Metso, *Textual Development* 32.

³⁴ P. S. Alexander, "The Redaction-History of *Serekh ha-Yahad*: A Proposal," *Revue de Qumran* 17 (1996) 437–56. The three recensions proposed by Alexander are as follows: (1) 1QS and 4Q257, (2) 4Q259, (3) 4Q256 and 4Q258.

³⁵ Metso, *Textual Development* 147.

³⁶ Metso, *Textual Development* 154.

that 1QS 3.13–4.26 is a relatively independent textual unit which had an origin independent of its placement in 1QS. There are indeed, spaces (*vacats*) between 1QS 3.9 and 3.10 and between 4.26 and 5.1 (as well as between 4.2 and 4.3 and 4.15 and 4.16). The origins of 1QS 3.13–4.10 thus antedate the compilation of 1QS, which occurred at from 100 to 75 CE.³⁷

The pneumatology and anthropology of 1QS 3.13–4.26 has often been used exclusively as the basis for interpreting references to the spirit in other Qumran texts, particularly the Hodayoth (1QH).³⁸ The chief significance of Huppenbauer's 1959 study of 1QS 3.13–4.26 is that he recognized that the type of dualism present in that text is not representative of the type of dualism found in the rest of the Qumran literature, with the exception of CD and 1QM.³⁹ In a more detailed fashion, Otto Betz distinguished between two conflicting conceptions of *ruach* in Qumran literature, the *Geisterlehre* of 1QS 3.13–4.26 which is not found elsewhere in Qumran literature, and the *Geistlehre* which deals with the Spirit of God which pervades the sectarian documents.⁴⁰ More recently, Lange has traced the influence of the two-spirits teaching in 1QS 3.13–4.26 in other Qumran texts, particularly 4Q181.⁴¹ Finally, Lichtenberger has argued convincingly that 1QS 3.13–4.26 is a theodicy, that is, systematic attempt to deal with problems arising from a belief in a good God and a recognition of the existence of evil in the world.⁴²

According to the categories of Bianchi, the dualism reflected in 1QS 3.13–4.26 is both moderate and eschatological, for it is clearly stated that the God of knowledge created everything (3.15), even the spirits of light and darkness (3.25). The microcosmic and macrocosmic dimensions of this dualism are clearly stated in 1QS 3.17–22 (trans. García Martínez):

³⁷ James H. Charlesworth, et al. (eds.), *Rule of the Community and Related Documents*, vol. 1 of *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek Texts with English Translations* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1994) 2.

³⁸ Sekki, *RUAH*, 26–31.

³⁹ Huppenbauer, *Der Mensch zwischen zwei Welten*, 103–114.

⁴⁰ Otto Betz, *Offenbarung und Schriftforschung in der Qumransekte* (WUNT 6; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1960) 140–46.

⁴¹ Armin Lange, *Weisheit und Prädestination: Weisheitliche Urordnung und Prädestination in den Textfunden von Qumran*, STDJ, 18 (Leiden: Brill, 1995) 121–70.

⁴² Hermann Lichtenberger, *Studien zum Menschenbild in Texten der Qumrangemeinde* (SUNT 15; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1980).

He created man to rule the world and placed within him two spirits so that he would walk with them until the moment of his visitation: they are the spirits of truth and of deceit. In the hand of the Prince of Lights is dominion over all the sons of justice; they walk on paths of light. And in the hand of the Angel of Darkness is total dominion over the sons of deceit; they walk on paths of darkness.

Thus from a macrocosmic perspective, the two opposed forces created by God are angelic beings, called the Prince of the Lights and the Angel of Darkness, while from a microcosmic perspective, they correspond to the spirit of truth and the spirit of error which constitute spiritual forces or dispositions within each person.

The doctrine of the two spirits in conflict within each individual is the focus of 1QS 4.15–26. The beginning of the section is marked with a *vacat*, which suggests the beginning of a new section. Here the microcosmic or psychological conflict with individuals is clearly stated in 1QS 4.23–24: “Until now the spirits of truth and of injustice feud in the heart of man and they walk in wisdom or in folly.” This anthropological conception has a parallel in 4Q186, an astrological text in which we find this statement: “His spirit has six [parts] in the house of light and three in the pit of darkness” (1 ii 7–8).

The tension between the two psychological forces and the two cosmological angelic figures in 1QS 3.13–4.26 has been resolved in two ways. For some scholars, the two angels, i.e., the Prince of Lights and the Angel of Darkness, are personifications of the two spirits which have only anthropological significance,⁴³ while for others the two spirits in people are microcosmic manifestations of a supernatural macrocosmic conflict.⁴⁴

The dualistic theology of the Damascus Document and the Manual of Discipline both have a microcosmic dualism, or ethical-psychological dualism, but only 1QS exhibits a macrocosmic dualism involving good and evil. 1QS 3.13–4.26 contains a long section on the divisions of humanity and the spirits by which they walk. The balanced dualism of the 1QS, in which the Prince of Light opposes the Prince of Darkness, is expressed only once in CD 5.18, where it is

⁴³ P. Wernberg-Møller, “A Reconsideration of the Two Spirits in the Rule of the Community (1QSerek III,3–IV,26),” *Revue de Qumrân* 11 (1961) 413–41. On p. 423, n. 30, he claims that the two angels of 1QS 3.20 are not cosmic beings but personifications of the two opposing dispositions in each person.

⁴⁴ Herbert May, “Cosmological Reference in the Qumran Doctrine of the Two Spirits and in Old Testament Imagery,” *JBL* 82 (1963) 1–14.

said that Moses and Aaron arose with the help of the Prince of Light, while Belial raised up Jannes and his brother. The authenticity of this passage is challenged several scholars.⁴⁵

1QS 3.13–4.26 is also connected to the Two Ways tradition which is also preserved in a common source found in different versions in *Barn.* 18–20 and *Did.* 1–6.⁴⁶ The beginning of the Two Ways tradition in *Barn.* 18:1–2 has a close similarity to 1QS 3.13–4.26:

There are two ways of teaching and power, one of light and one of darkness. And there is a great difference between the two ways. For over the one are set light-bringing angels of God, but over the other angels of Satan. And the one is the Lord from eternity and the other is the ruler of the present time of iniquity.

The same dualism is evident in *T. Judah* 20:1–5 (trans. Hollander and de Jonge):

¹Recognize, therefore, my children, that two spirits devote themselves to man, the spirit of truth and the spirit of deceit, ²and in the midst is the spirit of understanding of the mind (to which it belongs) to turn wheresoever it wishes. ³And the works of truth and the works of deceit are written upon the breast of man, and the Lord knows each of them; ⁴and there is no time at which the works of men can be hidden, because on his own breast they have been written down before the Lord. ⁵And the spirit of truth testifies all things and accuses all; and the sinner is burnt up from out of his own heart and cannot raise his face to the judge.

There is a basic phenomenological similarity between the dualistic schema in this passages and that found in Gal 5:16–17:

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and do not gratify the evil desires of the flesh. For the flesh has evil desires contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit contrary to the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you would.

⁴⁵ J.-L. Duhaime, “L’Instruction sur les deux esprits et les interpolations dualistes à Qumrān (1QS III,3–IV,26),” *Revue Biblique* 84 (1977) 584–87; J.-L. Duhaime, “Dualistic Reworking in the Scrolls from Qumran,” *CBQ* 49 (1987) 32–56; J. Murphy-O’Connor, “An Essene Missionary Document? CD II,14–VI,1,” *Revue Biblique* 77 (1970) 224.

⁴⁶ One of the major differences between the two versions is that the two ways in *Barnabas* are called “Light” and “Darkness,” while in the *Didache* they are labeled “Life” and “Death.” See Klaus Wengst, *Didache (Apostellehre), Barnabasbrief, Zweiter Klemensbrief, Schrift an Diognet* (München: Kösel-Verlag, 1984) 20–22.

Finally, the historical experience of persecution, rejection and social dislocation apparently experienced by both the Qumran sectarians and the Johannine community (e.g., expulsion from the synagogue) needs to be drawn into the picture since it provides a striking sociological correlation with the dualistic ideology clearly expressed in 1QS and 1QM, and therefore a plausible social *Sitz im Leben* for a dualistic theology. One of the suggested points of departure for reconstructing the history of the Johannine community is the experience of expulsion from the synagogue, reflected in John 9:22; 12:42 and 16:2, correlated with the *Birkath ha-Minim* (Benediction against the Heretics), perhaps accompanied by lynchings.⁴⁷ There is a current general consensus among Johannine scholars that the Fourth Gospel includes earlier sources, though understandably there are differences on the extent of the sources used and the number of redactions.⁴⁸ There are, however, a number of scholars who have attempted a detailed reconstruction of a signs source which was revised or amplified in one (Fortna; Nicol) or two (von Wahlde) subsequent literary stages.⁴⁹ For several scholars the underlying narrative source was extensive enough that it is probably more appropriate to designate it as a *Grundschrift*.⁵⁰ One striking common feature these analyses is the absence the two theological features upon which we have focused in this paper, dualistic language⁵¹ and the Spirit-Paraclete, in the reconstructed earlier source or first edition of the Fourth Gospel.⁵²

⁴⁷ J. L. Martyn, "Glimpses into the History of the Johannine Community," *The Gospel of John in Christian History: Essays for Interpreters* (New York: Paulist, 1978) 92, 103–4.

⁴⁸ The diversity is emphasized by D. A. Carson, "Current Source Criticism of the Fourth Gospel: Some Methodological Questions," *JBL* 97 (1978) 419.

⁴⁹ Jürgen Becker, "Wunder christologie: zum literarkritischen und christologischen Problem der Wunder im Johannesevangelium," *NTS* 16 (1969–70) 130–48; Robert T. Fortna, *The Gospel of Signs: A Reconstruction of the Narrative Source Underlying the Fourth Gospel* (SNTSMS 11; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1970); *idem*, "Source and Redaction in the Fourth Gospel's Portrayal of Jesus' Signs," *JBL* 89 (1970) 156–65; *idem*, *The Fourth Gospel*; W. Nicol, *The Semeia in the Fourth Gospel: Tradition and Redaction* (NovTSuppl 32; Leiden: Brill, 1972); Howard M. Teeple, *The Literary Origin of the Gospel of John* (Evanston: Religion and Ethics Institute, 1974); Urban C. von Wahlde, *The Earliest Version of John's Gospel* (Wilmington: Glazier, 1989).

⁵⁰ E. Haenchen, "Aus der Literatur zum Johannesevangelium 1929–1956," *Teologische Rundschau* 23 (1955) 303.

⁵¹ Martyn, "Glimpses," 101, 106; Wayne L. Meeks, "The Man from Heaven in Johannine Sectarianism," *JBL* 91 (1972) 44–72.

⁵² Fortna suggests that "a rudimentary form of some of the dualism" is already present in the Signs Gospel (*The Fourth Gospel* 259–60).

Recognizing the fact that dualistic language occurs only within certain parts of the Johannine discourse material, Jürgen Becker proposes a scheme of the graduate growth of Johannine dualism in four phases: (1) a predualistic phase in contact with other Hellenistic Jewish Christian traditions, (2) contact with dualism similar to that found at Qumran with a predestinarian ethical emphasis, (3) a modification of this dualism in terms of above and below, structurally similar to Gnostic dualism, and (4) a post-Gospel phase in which the Evangelist's influence continues in the community.⁵³

6. *The Spirit-Paraclete and the Spirit of Truth*

The origin and background of the figure of the Paraclete in Johannine literature remains a matter of debate.⁵⁴ The term *παράκλητος*, which occurs five times in Johannine literature (John 14:6, 26; 15:26; 16:7; 1 John 2:1), does not occur elsewhere in early Christian or early Jewish literature. The term appears to have been coined by the Johannine community. In 1 John 2:1, Jesus Christ is said to function as a heavenly *παράκλητος* with the Father (the term is anarthrous), while the four occurrences of *παράκλητος* in the Fourth Gospel are all titular. The figure of the Paraclete has been traditionally identified with the Holy Spirit, an identification made explicit in John 14:26, in the phrase *τὸ παράκλητος, τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον*, "the Paraclete, that is, the Holy Spirit." Further, the terms "Paraclete" and "the Spirit of Truth" are used as synonyms in the Fourth Gospel (14:16; 15:26; 16:7, cf. 16:13).⁵⁵ Methodologically, however, the functions of the Paraclete must be derived only from the five passages in the Fourth Gospel where the terms "Paraclete" and "Spirit of Truth" occur (John 14:15–17, 26; 15:26–27; 16:7–11, 13–14). The articular phrase *τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας* is used as a concept the author supposed

⁵³ Jürgen Becker, "Beobachtungen zum Dualismus im Johannesevangelium," *ZNW* 65 (1974) 71–87.

⁵⁴ See the extensive review in R. Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John*, vol. 3 (New York: Crossroad, 1982) 138–54, esp. 144–50.

⁵⁵ The first occurrence of *παράκλητος* is anarthrous in the phrase *ἄλλον παράκλητον* (John 14:16), implying both that Jesus is indirectly describing himself as the Paraclete (cf. 1 John 2:1), and indicating the author's assumption that this designation was unknown to his audience. This is confirmed by his use of the explanatory phrase *πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας*, a nominative of apposition (14:17).

was known to his audience; παράκλητος is therefore secondary to τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας.⁵⁶ The phrase τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας, however, is relatively rare in early Christian literature, for it occurs just four times in Johannine literature (John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13; 1 John 4:6), and once in Hermas *Mand.* 3.4.

In 1 John 4:6, the spirit of truth is contrasted with the spirit of error, just as in *T. Judah* 20:1–5, the only possibly pre-Christian text outside of the Qumran literature which uses the title “Spirit of Truth.”⁵⁷ The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs have often been thought to have some connection with the Essene community at Qumran (there are striking theological parallels in the areas of ethics, dualism, demonology, angelology, and messiology).⁵⁸ *T. Judah* 20.1–5 in particular bears a striking resemblance to the microcosmic dualism of 1QS 3.13–4.26 (trans. Hollander and de Jonge):

¹Recognize, therefore, my children, that two spirits devote themselves to man, the spirit of truth and the spirit of deceit [τὸ τῆς ἀληθείας καὶ τὸ τῆς πλάνης], ²and in the midst is the spirit of understanding of the mind (to which it belongs) to turn wheresoever it wishes. ³And the works of truth and the works of deceit are written upon the breast of man, and the Lord knows each of them; ⁴and there is no time at which the works of men can be hidden, because on his own breast they have been written down before the Lord. ⁵And the spirit of truth [τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας] testifies all things and accuses all; and the sinner is burnt up from out of his own heart and cannot raise his face to the judge.

Many scholars have maintained the view that the traditional concept of the Holy Spirit has been combined and reinterpreted by the concept of the “Paraclete” by the Fourth Evangelist.⁵⁹ Frank Cross

⁵⁶ George Johnson, *The Spirit-Paraclete in the Gospel of John* (SNTSMS 12; Cambridge: The University Press, 1970) 84.

⁵⁷ Marinus de Jonge, certainly the most influential modern interpreter of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, has argued that they are Christian compositions written by a single author ca. 190–225 AD, in *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: A Study of Their Text, Composition and Origin* (Assen: van Gorcum, 1953) 121–25.

⁵⁸ These four areas are emphasized in B. Otzen, “Die neugefundenen hebräischen Sektenschriften und die Testamente der Zwölf Patriarchen,” *Studia Theologica* 7 (1954) 125–57. For a review of research on this subject to 1975, see H. Dixon Slingerland, *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: A Critical History of Research* (SBLMS 21; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1977) 44–90.

⁵⁹ R. Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971) 566; *idem*, *TDNT* 1. 24.

was one of the first to suggest that the figure of the Paraclete in Johannine literature was derived from the complex of ideas in Qumran involving the “Prince of Light” or the “Spirit of Truth” who is a helper of the children of light, pointing to texts as 1QS 3.24, 1QM 13.10, and 17.6–8.⁶⁰ According to 1QS 3.24 (trans. García Martínez):

And all the spirits of their lot cause the sons of light to fall. However, the God of Israel and the angel of his truth assist all the sons of light.

A similar view is expressed in 1QM 17.6–8 (trans. Duhaime):

He has sent an everlasting help to the lot whom he has [re]deemed through the might of majestic angel. (He will set) the authority of Michael in everlasting light. He will cause the covenant of Israel to shine in joy! Peace and blessing to the lot of God! He will exalt over the divine being the authority of Michael and the dominion of Israel overall flesh. Righteousness shall rejoice in the heights and all his Sons of Truth shall be glad in everlasting knowledge.

In a major contribution toward the solution of this problem, though one which admittedly has failed to convince most scholars, Otto Betz examined the major options for the origin of the Greek term ὁ παράκλητος by focusing on the literature of “heretical late Judaism,” i.e., the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the Coptic Gnostic Nag Hammadi literature.⁶¹ Betz criticizes Mowinckel and Johansson, both of whom proposed that the Johannine Paraclete had its origin in the Jewish notion of an angelic intercessor,⁶² while he himself argued that the Johannine Paraclete originated with the Qumran community. Betz argues that the designation “the spirit of truth” in the Qumran literature is essentially equivalent to παράκλητος in the Johannine letters.⁶³ It was the Fourth Evangelist, however, who combined several ideas which are attested individually in the Qumran documents:⁶⁴ (1) The figure of Michael the archangel who is understood as the great helper and spokesman for Israel and prince in the kingdom of light in Qumran as well as in other early Jewish literature. (2) The “Spirit of Truth,” the enlightening and strengthening force in the hearts of the pious,

⁶⁰ Cross, *The Ancient Library of Qumran* 210–216.

⁶¹ Otto Betz, *Der Paraklet: Fürsprecher im häretischen Spätjudentum, im Johannes-Evangelium und in neu gefundenen gnostischen Schriften* (Leiden: Brill, 1963).

⁶² Betz, *Der Paraklet* 14–22.

⁶³ Betz, *Der Paraklet* 3.

⁶⁴ Betz, *Der Paraklet* 158.

attested in the Qumran literature and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs. (3) The title *παράκλητος*, which had gained currency in Judaism outside the Qumran community.

The genealogical reconstruction of the history of theological ideas is not as popular as it was when Betz wrote his dissertation. While his proposal is ingenious and puts as many of the pieces of the puzzle together as one could reasonably expect, there is still a lingering doubt over the validity and significance of the whole enterprise. Comparison and derivation are two quite different things, for comparison is the conceptual creation of the scholar who is making the comparisons, while derivation is the projection of that creation into the historical process.

7. Comparing Dualisms in John and Qumran

In the three preceding sections, dualistic phenomena in the Johannine literature and the literature from Qumran were discussed in some detail, and the figure of the Spirit-Paraclete of the Johannine literature and the Spirit of Truth of Qumran were compared. An attempt was made in discussing Johannine dualism to situate the phenomenon in the context of other early Christian literature where similarities to the Johannine materials were evident. At this point it is appropriate to compare and contrast the results of this review.

1. As we have seen above, the ethical dualism of light and darkness, found in both the Johannine literature and some Qumran texts, has close parallels in the dualistic language of conversion found in both early Christianity and early Judaism, and may in fact derive from such usage.

2. The general doctrine of the two spirits in 1QS 3.13–4.26, which is a central feature of the dualism in that document, has no close equivalent in Johannine literature.⁶⁵

3. The microcosmic anthropological or psychological function of the two spirits contending in the heart of each person according to 1QS 3–4, similarly has left little trace in the Fourth Gospel,⁶⁶ which (unlike the Synoptic Gospels) never speaks of demonic possession or casts Jesus in the role of an exorcist.

⁶⁵ Hans Conzelmann, *TNT* 9:349.

⁶⁶ Charlesworth, "Critical Comparison" 95.

4. Passages in which the Spirit of Truth is mentioned, have only a tenuous connection with the dualistic theology of the Fourth Gospel, though in John 16:7–11, the Paraclete is implicitly juxtaposed to “the ruler of this world,” while in John 14:16–17, the Paraclete, or Spirit of Truth, is set over against “the world.” Further, while the “Spirit of Truth” is mentioned in the Fourth Gospel, the “Spirit of Perversity” is absent. However, when Charlesworth claims that in the Fourth Gospel “there are not two warring Spirits,” but only a dualism of two worlds, he is incorrect.⁶⁷ These are surely completely different cosmic conceptions.

5. On the positive side, we read in 1 John 4:4, “Little children, you are of God and have overcome them; for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.” This antithesis between “he who is in you” and “he who is in the world” is understood in terms of conflict. This is very close to the dualistic schema in 1QS 3.17–20 (trans. García Martínez):⁶⁸

He [God] created man to rule the world and placed within him two spirits so that he would walk with them until the moment of his visitation: they are the spirits of truth and of deceit. In the hand of the Prince of Lights is dominion over all the sons of justice; they walk on paths of light. And in the hand of the Angel of Darkness is total dominion over the sons of deceit; they walk on paths of darkness.

6. It has been argued that at Qumran “the Angel of darkness is not the prince of the world; the world is divided ‘equally’ between the two spirits, the Prince of light and the Angel of Darkness.”⁶⁹ Against this view, however, 1QS 1.18 refers to the present time as *bmmshlt blyʿl*, “during the reign of Belial,” and 1QS 2.19 uses the phrase *kwʿl ywmy mmsht blyʿl*, “all the days of the reign of Belial.” The phrase *bmmshlt blyʿl* is part of the distinctive religious vocabulary of the Qumran Community which also occurs in 1QS 1.23–24; 1QM 14.9; 18.1; 4Q177a 1 8; 4QM1 = 4Q491 8–10 i 6–7; 4Q390 2 i 4.⁷⁰ The

⁶⁷ Charlesworth, “Critical Comparison” 98.

⁶⁸ Raymond E. Brown, *The Epistles of John* (AB 30; Garden City: Doubleday, 1982) 305.

⁶⁹ Simone Pétrement, *A Separate God: The Christian Origins of Gnosticism*, trans. C. Harrison (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1990) 176.

⁷⁰ Devorah Dimant, “New Light on the Jewish Pseudepigrapha—4Q390,” *The Madrid Qumran Congress: Proceedings of the International Congress on the Dead Sea scrolls, Madrid 18–21 March 1991*, vol. 2, ed. J. Trebelle Barrera and L. Vegas Montaner (STDJ XI,2; Leiden: Brill, 1992) 427.

fact that this conception is found explicitly expressed several times in five different sectarian documents suggests that it can be considered representative of their apocalyptic perspective.

7. If "Johannine dualism" is not found in pre-Christian Judaism, it is found in pre-Johannine Christianity, that is, in Paul, as we have argued above.⁷¹

8. Charlesworth argues that "John shares with 1QS a type of dualism which is unique."⁷² Though the arguments which follow emphasize the differences between the dualism in John and the dualism in 1QS more than the similarities (i.e., they differ with respect to angelology, eschatology, view of predestination and their solution to the problem of evil),⁷³ he nevertheless concludes that John was literarily dependent on the Community Rule.⁷⁴ Charlesworth focuses on four sets of terms which are shared by John and 1QS:⁷⁵ (1) "the Spirit of Truth" (John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13; 1QS 3.18–19; 4.21, 23), (2) "the holy Spirit" (John 14:26; 20:22; 1QS 4.21 ["the spirit of holiness"]); (3) "sons of light" (John 12:36; 1QS 3.13, 24, 25); (4) "eternal life" (John 3:15, 16 *et passim*; 1QS 4.7). Of these shared conceptions, the first is obviously important, and the third is interesting. Nevertheless the case Charlesworth makes for mutual dependence is astonishingly weak. Responding to this evaluation of Charlesworth, Pétremont observes: Pétremont, *A Separated God*, 176.

"It seems to me that this means that if John's dualism owes something to that of Qumran, it is only in a very minor way and that nothing very clear can be said on the subject."

8. *Concluding Reflections*

Scholars who have examined the phenomenological similarities between the Fourth Gospel and the literature of Qumran have often puzzled over the possible historical links between the two. Few have been able to leave the similarities at the phenomenological level and resist speculating about the historical or genetic links between the similar-

⁷¹ Pétremont, *A Separated God* 176.

⁷² Charlesworth, "Critical Comparison" 97.

⁷³ Charlesworth, "Critical Comparison" 99.

⁷⁴ Charlesworth, "Critical Comparison" 101.

⁷⁵ Charlesworth, "Critical Comparison" 101–2.

ities.⁷⁶ One solution has been to argue that there was direct literary dependence between those who produced the Fourth Gospel and the Community Rule (the view of Charlesworth),⁷⁷ while another has been to suppose that the author of the Fourth Gospel began as an Essene, but had a relatively late career change (the view of John Ashton).⁷⁸ Neither position can withstand critical scrutiny. Most scholars have remained content with the possibility of an “indirect” dependence (e.g., Raymond E. Brown and Rudolf Schnackenburg). The notion of “indirect” dependence, however, is a foggy conception which implies only that a diversity of experiences, beliefs, and communities in similar historical and cultural circumstances exhibit similarities of language and thought. The viability of explaining such similarities in genetic terms continues to prove elusive.

⁷⁶ The perilous task of comparison has been discussed at some length by Jonathan Z. Smith, *Drudgery Divine: On the Comparison of Early Christianities and the Religions of Late Antiquity* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1990). Following Smith see the more recent discussion of Luther H. Martin, “Comparison,” *Guide to the Study of Religion*, ed. Willi Braun and Russell T. McCutcheon (London and New York: Cassell, 2000) 45–56.

⁷⁷ Charlesworth, *John and Qumran*, 104: “John probably borrowed some of his dualistic terminology and mythology from 1QS 3:13–4:26.”

⁷⁸ Ashton, *Fourth Gospel* 205, 237.

Philo Studies

ALLEGORICAL INTERPRETATION AND JEWISH IDENTITY AMONG ALEXANDRIAN JEWISH WRITERS*

Ellen Birnbaum

1. *Introduction*

In contrast to their fellow Jews who lived in the homeland of Judea, Jewish residents of the ancient diaspora city Alexandria necessarily had to define themselves in relation to their non-Jewish environment. During the four and a half centuries after 331 BCE, when Alexander the Great founded Alexandria on the Mediterranean coast of Egypt, this non-Jewish environment consisted primarily of Greeks and Egyptians with their blend of traditions. On one hand, then, Alexandrian Jews had the opportunity to participate in and draw upon the city's rich, cosmopolitan culture, which was informed by the highest levels of Greek erudition. On the other hand, these Jews were challenged to balance their participation in the wider culture with a commitment to their treasured ancestral heritage, with its holy writings, monotheistic belief, and distinct modes of worship. This challenge—to participate in the broader culture while preserving their ancestral heritage—was a pivotal and defining issue for the Alexandrian Jewish community; and the creative tensions that resulted from negotiating this challenge are reflected in different ways throughout their literature.

One feature especially associated with certain Alexandrian Jewish works—namely, the *Letter of Aristeas*, the fragments of Aristobulus, and the writings of Philo—is the allegorical interpretation of Scripture. In fact, in the eyes of at least one scholar, allegorical interpretation itself was an important vehicle of expression for the attitudes of Jews toward their surroundings. In his learned book, *Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision in Ancient Alexandria*, David Dawson argues that through

* With much appreciation for Peder Borgen's contribution to scholarship, especially in the field of Philonic studies, I offer this article in his honor. In September 1998, my husband, Donald Altschiller, and I visited Peder and his wife, Inger, in Trondheim; their generosity, warmth, and gracious hospitality will always be a lovely memory. On this special occasion, I congratulate him and wish him many more years of productivity, happiness, and fulfillment.

allegorical interpretation, Alexandrian Jews subordinated classical Greek meanings to scriptural ones and proclaimed Moses as the source of Greek learning.¹ As Dawson observes, in Alexandrian Jewish writings, “classical wisdom is best understood as *derivative* Mosaic insight” (81, my emphasis). When Philo, for example, locates general philosophical truths within the particular details of Scripture, his interpretations offer us, according to Dawson, “not a synthesis but a usurpation” (113). Through allegorical interpretation, then, the best of Greek culture is presented as originally Jewish.

Following Dawson’s lead, we shall look more closely at allegorical interpretation as an expression of Jewish identity—and particularly as an expression of Alexandrian Jewish attitudes toward non-Jews and non-Jewish culture.² Part of our task will be to examine Dawson’s argument to see whether the allegorical meanings offered by Alexandrian Jews are necessarily Greek or only Greek and also whether the subordination of Greek meanings to Scripture is as widely characteristic of these writers as he claims. Beyond these questions, however, we shall probe even further into the role of allegorical interpretation in conveying how Alexandrian Jews saw themselves in relation to neighboring non-Jews and their culture.

Let us begin by clarifying our understanding of allegorical interpretation and our specific questions about Jewish identity. Guided by

¹ D. Dawson, *Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision in Ancient Alexandria* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992) 73–126. I am most grateful to Professor Dawson for his graciousness in discussing with me an earlier version of this paper.

² In this essay, I use the term “Jewish identity” exclusively within the context of the relationship between Jews and non-Jews, i.e., to denote Jewish attitudes towards others or Jewish self-perceptions in relation to others. Although I am focusing upon this one aspect of Jewish identity, there are of course several other aspects. For further discussion of the components of identity, in general, and of the identity of Alexandrian Jews, in particular, see J. J. Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem: Jewish Identity in the Hellenistic Diaspora*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Livonia: Dove Booksellers, 2000) esp. 1–26; J. M. G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora: From Alexander to Trajan (323 BCE–117 CE)* (Berkeley: University of California, 1996) esp. 82–102; A. Mendelson, *Philo’s Jewish Identity*, Brown Judaic Studies 161 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988) esp. 1–28; G. E. Sterling, “‘Thus are Israel’: Jewish Self-Definition in Alexandria,” *The Studia Philonica Annual (SPhilo)* 7 (1995) 1–18; M. Niehoff, *Philo on Jewish Identity and Culture*, Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism 86 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001) esp. 1–13; Per Bilde, et al., eds., *Ethnicity in Hellenistic Egypt* (Aarhus: University of Aarhus, 1992), esp. the essays by U. Oestergaard, “What is National and Ethnic Identity?” (16–38); K. Goudriaan, “Ethnical Strategies in Graeco-Roman Egypt” (74–99); P. Borgen, “Philo and the Jews in Alexandria” (122–38); and C. R. Holladay, “Jewish Responses to Hellenistic Culture in Early Ptolemaic Egypt” (139–63).

the etymological explanation of allegory offered by the first-century CE commentator on Homer, Heraclitus (or pseudo-Heraclitus), we shall understand the term “allegory” broadly to denote a kind of discourse that states one thing while meaning something else.³ Accordingly, we shall distinguish between allegory, as contained in the Bible, and allegorical interpretation of the allegory, as found in the *Letter of Aristaeas*, Aristobulus, and Philo.⁴ As we shall see, this kind of interpretation may be applied to a range of scriptural subjects such as food laws, descriptions of God, or aspects of biblical narrative. Moreover, to explain the “something else” that the Bible is referring to, an interpreter might draw upon a variety of fields such as Platonic metaphysics, Stoic ethics, or even, simply, practical wisdom.⁵ Thus, allegorical interpretation in its singular form does not describe a one-of-a-kind approach and it may be more appropriate to speak of allegorical interpretations in the plural.

In considering the role allegorical interpretations play in expressing Jewish identity, we shall be interested in the following questions: Most basically, does the “something else” presented in allegorical interpretations reflect Jewish identity in relation to non-Jews and, if so, how? In those interpretations that do reflect relations between Jews and others, for example, did Jews see themselves as equal to non-Jews or superior to them? Within the same work, are allegorical

³ John Dillon cites Heraclitus in “Philo and the Greek Tradition of Allegorical Exegesis,” *SBLSP* (1994) 70–71. The very definition of allegory can be a topic unto itself. See also Dawson, *Allegorical Readers*, 1–21; D. M. Hay, “Defining Allegory in Philo’s Exegetical World,” *SBLSP* (1994) 55–68; H. A. Wolfson, *Philo: Foundations of Religious Philosophy: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1947) 115–38; J. Rosenberg, *King and Kin: Political Allegory in the Hebrew Bible* (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1986) esp. 1–46; S. D. Sperling, *The Original Torah: The Political Intent of the Bible’s Writers* (New York: New York University, 1998) 27–40.

⁴ It is generally agreed that these three sources contain at least some form of allegorical interpretation, although elements of this type of exegesis may also be found in other Alexandrian Jewish writers, e.g., Wis 18:24. In this study, I use the term “allegorize” to mean “interpret allegorically,” and I refer to the Alexandrian Jewish writers under discussion as “allegorizers.”

⁵ Alexandrian Jewish allegorizers may have been influenced by Greeks not only in the fields of reference (including Greek philosophy) upon which they drew, but also in the very method of allegorical interpretation itself. For an overview of some positions in the debate about whether Alexandrian Jewish allegorizers, especially Philo, were more influenced by Greek or Palestinian sources, see P. Borgen, “Philo of Alexandria: A critical and syncretical survey of research since World War II,” *ANRW* II.21.1, 128–32. See also L. Ginzberg, “Allegorical Interpretation of Scripture,” *On Jewish Law and Lore* (New York: Atheneum, 1970) 127–50.

interpretations consistent in their views of these matters, and are these interpretations consistent with other, non-allegorical, kinds of discourse within the work? To what extent might allegorical interpretations reflect contemporary social, cultural, and political realities? Finally, do these interpretations offer any suggestions about the intended audience(s) for the larger works in which these interpretations are found?

The subordination of Greek wisdom to Jewish Scripture described by Dawson is certainly one way in which Jewish allegorizers asserted the superiority of the Jews, promoting what I would call a “particularist” aspect of Jewish identity. Another way they asserted superiority, as we shall see, was to explain scriptural details in a manner that shows Jews to be morally or spiritually better than other people. Although some allegorical interpretations promote these views, however, I shall also argue that other allegorical interpretations can promote a very different—indeed a universalist—view, namely, that Jews and others have *equal* standing, whether in relation to God, wisdom, or virtue. In addition, allegorical interpretations may simply be neutral, promoting neither one view nor the other.

In other modes of discourse within their own writings, authors may also contradict, or seem to contradict, what they proclaim within their allegorical interpretations. In the case of Philo, the allegorical interpretations themselves may express contradictory stances. Accordingly, it may be impossible to reconcile different currents within one writer, and it may be best simply to acknowledge these currents as they are. Allegorical interpretations may indeed reflect social, political, and cultural realities. One must tread cautiously, however, in drawing conclusions about what particular realities are being reflected. Finally, Alexandrian Jewish authors may have intended their writings for both Jews and non-Jews, with a variety of aims.⁶

⁶ In discussing this literature, I have deliberately avoided characterizing it as “apologetic,” a word that implies a defensive stance, perhaps before a hostile—or at least a dubious—audience. While these writings may have been composed with some apologetic aims, such aims did not necessarily predominate. In his landmark essay, “Jewish Apologetic Literature Reconsidered” (*Eos* 48 [1956] 169–93), Victor Tcherikover argued that the audience for this literature may have been Jews themselves. More recently, this perspective has also been developed by E. Gruen, who underscores the confidence and vitality of the Jews who produced this literature (*Heritage and Hellenism: The Reinvention of Jewish Tradition* [Berkeley: University of California, 1998]). See also Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem* 14–16.

2. *The Letter of Aristeas*

To illustrate some of these observations, let us begin with the *Letter of Aristeas*, a source that most likely dates to the second century BCE and purports to describe the translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek under Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285–247 or 284–246 BCE). Although the identity of the author is questionable, for convenience I shall refer to him as “Aristeas.” This document is commonly spoken of as a letter but, as Moses Hadas has convincingly argued, we should rather classify it as a *diegesis*, or narrative, with many different components.⁷

The section that most interests us is the explanation in passages 128–71 offered by the high priest Eleazar about the food laws proclaimed by Moses. On the whole, this section promotes the view that Jews are distinct from and superior to other peoples. It accomplishes this in several ways, however, not just through allegorical interpretation. Preceding the interpretations, for example, is a series of statements that, among other things, proclaim the power of the Jewish God and decry idol worship, the polytheism of the Greeks, and the animal worship of the Egyptians (130–38). Eleazar explicitly declares that the purpose of the food laws is to distinguish the Jews from these improper modes of worship, and he likens the laws to “impregnable palisades” and “walls of iron” (139). Although Eleazar does not explicitly mention the Jews by name, his many first-person references, for example, “our lawgiver” (131) or “with our countrymen” (*par’ hemon*, 141), would indicate that it is the Jews he has in mind.

As for the interpretations themselves, the reasons offered for the permitted and forbidden animals are based both upon the animals’ behavior—which should be either emulated or avoided—and upon physical features—whose symbolism suggests behavior to be emulated. The interpretation that most explicitly highlights separation of the Jews from others—and indeed the moral superiority of Jews to others—is the one regarding the feature of the cloven hoof (150b–52). The separation in the hoof signifies the setting apart of actions “with

⁷ M. Hadas (ed. and trans.), *Aristeas to Philocrates (Letter of Aristeas)* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1951) 54–59. Quotations from the *Letter of Aristeas* are taken from this source; brackets within a quotation indicate my own modifications to the translation. While accepting Hadas’s characterization of the text as a narrative, following convention, I refer to this source as the “*Letter of Aristeas*” or the “*Letter*.”

a view to what is right,” but also—more important for our purposes—the separation of Jews from “most of the rest of mankind,” who act immorally (152). As Eleazar explains,

[For the parting and separating (*diastellein*) of the cloven hoof] is a symbol to discriminate (*diastellein*) in each of our actions with a view to what is right; for the strength of the whole body and its energy depend upon the shoulders and legs. He constrains us, by taking note through these symbols, to do all things with discrimination (*diastole*) and with a view to righteousness. An additional signification is that we are set apart (*diestalmetha*) from all men. For most of the rest of mankind defile themselves by their promiscuous unions, working great righteousness, and whole countries and cities pride themselves on these vices. Not only do they have intercourse with males, but they even defile mothers and daughters. But we have been kept apart (*diestalmetha*) from such things. (150b–52)

In his master’s thesis entitled “Diet as Morality: Tracing an Exegetical Tradition,” James Rhodes points out that when Eleazar discusses the cloven hoof, he repeatedly inserts the verb *diastello*, to separate or discriminate, and its cognate noun, *diastole*, separation or discrimination, words that do not appear in the underlying Septuagint passages about the cloven hoof (Lev 11:3–8; Deut 14:6–8).⁸ Aristeas’s use of these words, as shown in the above quotation, underscores the separation of Jews from others. Although Leviticus itself (20:24–26) suggests this separation as a rationale for the food laws in general, there are certainly other ways of interpreting these laws. Philo, for example, who offers similar allegorizations, sees these laws as symbolic of the educational process (*Spec.* 4.104–8).

Because it is difficult to date the *Letter of Aristeas* with any precision, we cannot easily extrapolate from these interpretations specific details about contemporary social or political realities. Who, for example, *are* all those people who practice homoerotic and incestuous unions as described in section 152? Also intriguing in his explanation of the weasel as an informer is Eleazar’s reference to the king’s execution of such persons (165–67). One suspects that the author had specific people in mind in making these references. Unfortunately, however,

⁸ J. N. Rhodes, “Diet as Morality: Tracing an Exegetical Tradition” (Master’s Thesis, The Catholic University of America, 2000) 62–63. As Rhodes points out, the first part of Hadas’s translation does not reflect use of *diastellein*; I have therefore modified this section of the translation above and included this modification within brackets.

we know too little about the population of Ptolemaic Alexandria and about the circumstances surrounding the *Letter* to be able to pinpoint who was intended by these references.⁹ Nonetheless, it is worthwhile to raise these questions if only to remind ourselves that the social and political context in which the document was produced may have had a bearing on these remarks.

Scholars have noted what Victor Tcherikover has termed a “duality” in *Aristeas*: On the one hand, in the section on food laws we have been discussing, Eleazar conveys a sense that the Jews keep separate from and are superior to non-Jews. On the other hand, the work is also quite positive about non-Jews.¹⁰ Especially noteworthy is *Aristeas*’s statement in section 16 that the God whom the Jews worship is the same as the one everyone worships, including the king and *Aristeas* themselves, though the king and *Aristeas* address Him using different names. The Jewish translators are described as being proficient not only in Jewish literature but in that of the Greeks as well (121). Greek wisdom is reflected in the responses of the translators to the king during the banquet (187–294). Moreover, despite the emphasis upon separation, the Jewish translators do in fact eat with the non-Jews, albeit with their own permitted food (181).

If one were to characterize this source as a whole, then, one would have to recognize these various, perhaps contradictory, elements. Among these elements, the allegorization of the cloven hoof as a symbol of the division between Jews and others serves to underscore the portrayal of the Jews as both separate and superior.¹¹ In this

⁹ For a summary of considerations pertinent to dating the *Letter of Aristeas*, see Hadas, *Aristeas to Philocrates* 3–54. Hadas himself dates the document hypothetically to 130 BCE, though he recognizes there is no conclusive evidence for this or any other date (54). Some scholars have taken the king’s punishment of the informers to be a veiled reference to a similar punishment carried out by Tiberius in 33 CE. Accordingly, these scholars believe the *Letter* should be dated to Roman times. As Hadas points out, however, Eleazar’s mention of this incident is too general to allow for such a specific identification (15). For speculations about the population in Ptolemaic Alexandria, see P. M. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972) 1:38–92, and K. Goudriaan, *Ethnicity in Ptolemaic Egypt* (Amsterdam: J. C. Gieben, 1988). In his article “Ethnical Strategies” (98, n. 69), Goudriaan questions Fraser’s statistics.

¹⁰ V. Tcherikover, “The Ideology of the Letter of Aristeas,” *HTR* 51 (1958) 59–85. See this article for additional details that document the duality. It is now fairly commonplace to recognize different currents in the *Letter*. For various interpretations of these currents, see n. 11.

¹¹ Viewing the section on food laws as different from the rest of the *Letter*, some

allegorization, however, I do not necessarily see a subordination of specifically Greek meaning to Scripture, as Dawson claims is found in other Alexandrian Jewish interpretations.¹² The rationale of separation can also be found, for example, in the Qumran text known as 4QMMT, which may be roughly contemporary to Aristéas. Here the prohibitions against mixing species of animals and crops and against having clothing of mixed fabrics are understood to signify the prohibition against mingling priests and laity, or—put another way—these prohibitions signify the need to keep the two groups separate.¹³

For whom did Aristéas present this dual attitude about Jews and non-Jews? Arguments can support the contention that the author had both Jews and non-Jews in mind. Introducing the explanations of the food laws, for example, Aristéas observes that most people are curious about these laws (128). The deeper reasons offered for observing the laws may thus have satisfied the curiosity of non-Jews about the seemingly strange practices and may also have provided meaningful explanations to Jews who maintained these practices. Perhaps the work in general addressed how Jews could have participated in the larger culture and, at the same time, maintained pride in their ancestral heritage, offering the possibility that one could really do both.¹⁴

scholars, in fact, have suggested that the author may have drawn this section from another source. See Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 1:701 and 2:980, n. 159. The repeated expression of admiration for the Jewish translators offered by Aristéas and then by the king and the philosophers during the banquet in the latter part of the document contribute to an impression that the author wishes to present the Jews as superior (see, e.g., Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora* 138–50; Dawson, *Allegorical Readers* 81–82; Gruen, *Heritage and Hellenism* 215–18; Holladay, “Jewish Responses to Hellenistic Culture” 147–49). The *Letter* carries sufficient ambiguity, however, to permit other interpretations as well; see, e.g., Hadas, *Aristéas to Philocrates* 62–63, and Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem* 191–95.

¹² In a recent article, K. Berthelot makes the stimulating suggestion that the author of the *Letter of Aristéas* was influenced by Pythagorean traditions that included similar allegorizations of animals to be avoided (“L’interprétation symbolique des lois alimentaires dans la *Lettre d’Aristée*: une influence pythagoricienne,” *JJS* 52 [2001] 253–68). Even if Berthelot is correct, however, the injunction to eat animals with cloven hooves is distinctly biblical and, as we have seen, Eleazar gives this injunction a distinctly Jewish explanation.

¹³ E. Qimron and J. Strugnell, *Qumran Cave 4.V: Miqsat Ma’ase ha-Torah*, Discoveries in the Judean Desert X (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994) 56–57. I am indebted to Professor Strugnell for calling my attention to this parallel interpretation.

¹⁴ Gruen offers strong arguments in favor of a primarily Jewish audience (*Heritage and Hellenism* 212–22). While I agree with him that the *Letter* appears to promote

3. *Aristobulus*

The fragments of Aristobulus, who may also have written in the second century BCE, similarly reflect a Jew quite comfortable in two worlds—the Jewish and the Greek. This writer, however, takes a somewhat different approach to relations between Jews and others, and his use of allegorical interpretation is also different. Whereas Aristeeas provides a rationale and a deeper meaning for the food laws, Aristobulus offers interpretations to protect “the fitting conception of God” (Fragment 2.2), explaining how one should understand anthropomorphic references to Him in the Bible.¹⁵ God’s hand, for example, signifies His power (Fr. 2.7–8), while His voice refers not to “a spoken word, but [to] the establishment of things” (Fr. 4.3).¹⁶ Similarly, God’s “standing” should be understood as His establishment of the order of the earth under His direction (Fr. 2.9–10).

In like manner, Aristobulus explains two miracles—one, in which God descended before the nation amid trumpet blasts and fire (in Exod 19:16–19) and another, in which the bush was not consumed by the fire (in Exod 3:2). These miracles, according to Aristobulus, were intended to demonstrate God’s own unaided revelation of His magnificence in all things (Fr. 2.12–17). In all these interpretations, Aristobulus is concerned to explain that God does not have human form or attributes and that He cannot be contained in one locality.

Although none of these interpretations pertains directly to the relation between Jews and others, Aristobulus is nonetheless interested in this subject. He expresses his thoughts on these matters, however, not so much in his allegorical interpretations as in his statements declaring that Greek philosophers and poets took their wisdom from

the view that Jews are superior (see above, n. 11), I also agree with Barclay, who sees no reason to exclude interested non-Jews from the author’s intended audience (*Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora* 148–49).

¹⁵ Quotations from Aristobulus are taken from A. Yarbro Collins, trans., “Aristobulus,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed., J. Charlesworth (Garden City: Doubleday, 1985) 2:337–42.

¹⁶ Instead of “the establishment of things,” Carl Holladay translates *ergon kataskeuai* as “creative acts” (*Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors*, vol. 3: *Aristobulus*; Texts and Translations 39; Pseudepigrapha Series 13 [Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995] 162–63 and 218, n. 91). P. Borgen suggests the words refer to “preparation for the works of creation” (“Philo of Alexandria,” in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran Sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus*, ed. M. Stone, CRINT 2.2 [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984] 276–77).

Moses (Fr. 2.4, 3.1, 4.4–6, 5.13–17).¹⁷ Here Dawson's arguments are quite relevant, for Aristobulus does indeed subordinate the teachings of the Greeks to those of Moses. While Aristobulus claims, however, that the allegorical meanings he discerns can be found in Greek writers, these meanings can also be found in non-Greek sources. Indeed similar declarations about God's power, magnificence, and creative acts can be found elsewhere in the Bible itself—for instance, in the Psalms (e.g., Pss 8, 19, 24, 93, 145, 148). Dawson's argument, therefore, that Alexandrian Jewish writers appropriated Greek meanings for their interpretations does not entirely apply here.

Somewhat different is Aristobulus's discussion of the Sabbath in which he claims that the seventh day is a sign of the sevenfold principle (*hebdomos logos*) or, perhaps, the seventh faculty, namely, reason, "by which we have knowledge of human and divine matters" (Fr. 5.12). Here Aristobulus's explanation of the sevenfold principle or the seventh faculty is probably dependent upon Greek philosophers, and his understanding of wisdom as "knowledge of human and divine matters" is clearly Greek.¹⁸ Aristobulus goes on, however, to adduce alleged prooftexts from Greek writers attesting to their recognition of the importance—but not the symbolic meaning—of the seventh day. In other words, these citations confirm the literal sense that the seventh day is holy, but not the allegorical sense that this day represents the seventh faculty or sevenfold principle. Here, then, Aristobulus's claim that Greek thinkers took their wisdom from Moses applies not to the allegorical meaning of the seventh day but to its literal meaning.¹⁹

¹⁷ In Fr. 2.4, Aristobulus refers to those who borrowed from Moses as philosophers "and many others, including poets," without naming them specifically; in Fr. 3.1, he names Plato and Pythagoras; in Fr. 4.4, he names Pythagoras, Socrates, and Plato; in Fr. 4.4b–6, he names Orpheus and Aratus and provides quotations; in Fr. 5.13–16, he names Homer, Hesiod, and Linus and provides quotations. See Holladay, *Aristobulus*, 207–9, n. 36. On the authenticity of Aristobulus's quotations, see *ibid.*, 49–72. On Aristobulus's use of the theme of Greek dependence upon the Jews, see N. Walter, *Der Thoraasleger Aristobulos: Untersuchungen zu seinen Fragmenten und zu pseudepigraphischen Resten der jüdisch-hellenistischen Literatur* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1964) 43–51, and P. Pilhofer, *Presbyteron Kreiton: Der Altersbeweis der jüdischen und christlichen Apologeten und seine Vorgeschichte*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2.39 (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1990) 164–72. Walter believes these claims were only tangential to Aristobulus's purpose (45).

¹⁸ See Holladay, *Aristobulus* 230–33, nn. 142 and 144; Walter, *Der Thoraasleger Aristobulos* 68–81; Borgen, "Philo of Alexandria," in *Jewish Writings* 276–77.

¹⁹ Scholars have questioned the authenticity of the verses attributed by Aristobulus in Fragment 5 to Homer, Hesiod, and Linus (see above, n. 17, and also Barclay,

As Dawson maintains, then, Aristobulus does express a sense of Jewish superiority when he declares that the most honorable Greeks are indebted to Moses for their insights.²⁰ This expression is conveyed more clearly in the rhetorical claim itself, however, than in the actual allegorizations. Indeed, for our purposes, it is somewhat irrelevant whether or not Aristobulus derived his interpretations from Greek thought. This is because the allegorizations play no role related to Jewish identity *per se*. Instead, they serve to guard the proper conception about God and to explain the symbol of the seventh day. Thus, where Aristaeas expresses separateness and superiority in the very allegorical explanations of the food laws, Aristobulus expresses superiority of the Jews *outside* his allegorical interpretations, i.e., in his claims that Greek philosophers and poets took their ideas from Moses.

As for Aristobulus's audience, it is worth noting that in Fragment 2, in which Aristobulus explains the anthropomorphic references to God (discussed above) and in Fragment 3, in which he claims that Plato and Pythagoras borrowed from earlier translations of the Jewish legislation, Aristobulus addresses his explanations to the king, assumed to be Ptolemy VI Philometor (181 or 180–145 BCE). While this address to the king may be simply a literary convention, it indicates that Aristobulus envisioned—even if only in theory and even if only in part—a non-Jewish audience for his writings.²¹ At the same time, his statements about the proper way to interpret Moses's teachings (Fr. 2.2–5) may certainly have been addressed to other Jews who needed guidance in these matters. Thus, like Aristaeas, Aristobulus too may have directed his comments toward a mixed audience of Jews and non-Jews, to impress both groups with the profundity and originality of Jewish wisdom.²²

Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora 157, and Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* 1:695). Because these verses support the literal sense of the seventh day as holy and because we are interested in the appropriation of Greek thought in allegorical interpretations, the question of the authenticity of these verses is not directly relevant for our purposes.

²⁰ Dawson, *Allegorical Readers* 78–81.

²¹ For a summary of the discussion about the dating of this work, see Holladay, *Aristobulus* 49–62 and 74–75. See also Yarbrow Collins, "Aristobulus" 832–33. On the literary convention of addressing a work to the king, see Holladay, *Aristobulus* 71, 74–75, and Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* 1:694.

²² Scholars have questioned whether Aristobulus preceded Aristaeas or was dependent upon Aristaeas. An argument in favor of his preceding Aristaeas is that Aristobulus's allegorical interpretations are less developed than those in Aristaeas (Walter, *Der*

4. *Philo of Alexandria*

Turning now to Philo, we find both his use of allegorical interpretation and his expression of Jewish identity to be more complex than those of his predecessors. Philo presents us with different kinds of allegorical interpretations as well as layers of tradition, or interpretations incorporated from earlier exegetes. Thus, to name but a few examples, Philo offers ethical explanations of Mosaic laws, like those of Aristeeas; anti-anthropomorphic interpretations about God, like those of Aristobulus; and allegorical accounts of the journey of the soul, some of which may be original to Philo himself.²³ His allegorical interpretations, moreover, can express both particularist and universalist views; and these interpretations may also reflect contemporary social and political circumstances in Alexandria.

Expressions of Particularism and Universalism

As Dawson has amply illustrated, Philo uses allegorical interpretation to subordinate Greek meanings to Scripture, and he portrays Moses as the source of these meanings.²⁴ A notably effective example of the subordination of Greek wisdom to that of Scripture—and, in fact, of the subordination of a Greek thinker to a Jewish ancestor—can be found in Philo's treatise *De Somniis* (1.55–60). Here Philo expands upon the place name "Haran," which he associates with the senses and with a certain level of self-knowledge marked by familiarity with and understanding of how the body works. Haran was the stopping point of Terah, the father of Abraham (Gen 11:31–32). Philo equates the "Haran" kind of knowledge with Socrates's philosophy, "know thyself." In this allegorization, Socrates, Terah, and Abraham stand for three kinds of knowledge. Socrates represents an individual who embraces the philosophy "know thyself"; Terah, a little better, rep-

Thorausleger Aristobulos 146–47; see also 49, n. 2). Arguments supporting Aristobulus's dependence on Aristeeas include the claim that Aristobulus was aware of Aristeeas's legend about the translation of the Septuagint (Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* 1:694). See also Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem* 187–88.

²³ On the different kinds of allegorical interpretations in Philo, see T. H. Tobin, S.J., *The Creation of Man: Philo and the History of Interpretation*, CBQMS, 14 (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1983); D. M. Hay, "Philo's References to Other Allegorists," *SPhilo* 6 (1979–1980) 41–75; *idem*, "Politics and Exegesis in Philo's Treatise on Dreams," *SBLSP* (1987) esp. 432.

²⁴ Dawson, *Allegorical Readers* 107–10.

resents the abstract quality of self-knowledge. Better than both of these, however, is Abraham, founder of the Jewish nation, who moved beyond knowledge of the self to attain knowledge of God.²⁵

This is an especially good example of how Philo uses an allegorical interpretation to express his sense that the Jews are superior to Greeks. Moreover, like Aristobulus, Philo also expresses this superiority in rhetorical claims that the Greeks took their ideas from Moses. In addition, he asserts in several places that the Jews, or a representative of the Jews, are culturally or morally superior to Greeks, and in fact that the Jews are superior to Greeks and barbarians combined.²⁶

Thus, in the allegorization just mentioned and elsewhere—in non-allegorical statements—throughout his works, Philo quite clearly adopts this position—namely, that the Jews are superior to Greeks and others. He also, however, uses allegorical interpretations to support a very different position and to universalize those features most particular to the Jewish nation and its history. The biblical covenant, for example, expresses the special and unique relationship between God and His chosen people Israel. According to the covenantal agreement, God declares that He will be God to the people if they in turn follow His commandments. This relationship, forged at a specific point in time at Mount Sinai, is meant to continue with Israel's descendants, the Jews.

In Philo's allegorical interpretations, however, Israel, the chosen people, and the covenant lose their distinctive features, and the interpretations allow for the possibility that *all* who are virtuous and wise may stand in special relation to God. A particularly good example of this can be seen in Philo's interpretation of Deut 32:8–9 in *Post.* 91–92. The biblical verses are as follows:

²⁵ Although Philo does not describe Abraham as founder of the Jewish nation in this passage, he does so elsewhere, in *Mos.* 1.7; see also *Virt.* 212.

²⁶ On Greeks borrowing from Moses or the Jews, see, e.g., *Leg.* 1.108; *Her.* 214; *Spec.* 4.61; *Prob.* 57; *QG.* 4.152, 167. On Jews or a representative of the Jews as better in some way than Greeks or a representative of the Greeks, see, e.g., *Leg.* 2.15; *Plant.* 14; *Mos.* 1.1–2, 21–24; *Spec.* 3.12, 15–16; *Praem.* 8–9; *Contempl.* 14, 40–42, 57–59, 68. On Jews as better in some way than Greeks and barbarians combined, see, e.g., *Cher.* 91; *Plant.* 62–68; *Abr.* 178–91, 262–67; *Mos.* 2.12, 18–20; *Spec.* 2.165–66; 4.119–20; *Contempl.* 48, 64. For further discussion, including references to other scholarly literature that deals with this tendency in Philo, see E. Birnbaum, "Philo on the Greeks: A Jewish Perspective on Culture and Society in First-Century Alexandria," *SPhilo* 13 (2001) 37–58.

²⁶When the Most High distributed nations,
 When He dispersed the sons of Adam,
 He set boundaries of nations
 According to the number of angels of God,
²⁷And Jacob His people became the Lord's portion;
 Israel became the lot of His inheritance.²⁷

The most relevant section for us is verse 9 because this verse suggests that the people of Israel are uniquely linked with God.

In Philo's interpretation, the nations being "distributed" (Deut 32:8) become nations of the soul (*Post.* 91). In *Post.* 92, Philo comments as follows on verse 9:

The particular virtues belong to the servants, to the Ruler, the chosen [race/class] (*to epilekton genos*) of Israel. For he that sees God . . . has been allotted as His portion to Him Whom he sees.

I have argued that in this interpretation, Philo is playing upon multiple meanings of the word *genos* as a race, class, or genus.²⁸ Because of this ambiguity, the chosen *genos* can denote a race defined by birth or a class defined by certain qualities. In addition to the sense of "chosen race/class," then, Philo is also contrasting the *specific* virtues (*hai en eidei aretai*), represented by the nations, with *generic* virtue (*to epilekton genos*), represented by Israel. Whether as chosen race/class or as generic virtue, however, Israel acquires yet another definition, based upon the Philonic etymology of Israel as "one who sees God." Here then, Philo ignores the sense of Israel as a historical, ethnic entity, presenting it instead as an entity marked by its spiritual capability. While Israel is clearly chosen, it remains unclear whether Israel is an ethnic group equivalent to the Jews or an entity defined by spiritual qualities alone, which could include Jews as well as qualified non-Jews.

Similarly, although Philo rarely mentions the covenant between God and Israel or its forefathers, in two allegorical interpretations (*Sacr.* 57 and *Mut.* 52–53), he explains God's covenant as a symbol

²⁷ This translation is taken from F. H. Colson and G. H. Whitaker, *Philo in Ten Volumes (and Two Supplementary Volumes)*, The Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927) 2:377. All translations of Philo are taken from the Loeb edition; my own modifications to these translations are included in brackets.

²⁸ E. Birnbaum, *The Place of Judaism in Philo's Thought: Israel, Jews, and Proselytes*, Brown Judaic Studies 290; SPhilo Monographs 2 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996) 138. On the ambiguity of *genos*, see also *ibid.*, 52–54.

of His grace. Here he is no doubt influenced by the nuance of the Greek word for covenant, *diatheke*, a testament or will, that is, something bestowed upon others. In *Sacr.* 57, the recipient of God's gift—understood here as virtuous behavior—is not explicitly identified, whereas in *Mut.* 52–53, the recipients of God's grace may include any who are deserving of it, as well as the soul.²⁹ Since Philo nowhere affirms the sense of the covenant as an agreement consisting of mutual obligations between God and specific people—namely, the ancestors of the Jews—his allegorizations leave us with the impression that God's covenant, grace, may extend to all creation or else to all who are worthy of the divine gift.

Many other examples can illustrate this phenomenon whereby Philo redefines such particular characteristics as the covenant, the chosen people, and even Israel itself.³⁰ In line with Dawson's claims, one may, perhaps, argue that Philo is subordinating certain Greek concepts—such as virtue, seeing God, or grace—to the particular details of Israel, the chosen people, and the covenant. These same concepts, however, can also be found within Jewish tradition.³¹ In any case, what is especially significant for our purposes is that in the process of introducing these concepts into his allegorizations, Philo is also giving new meaning to the most particular aspects of Jewish identity, suggesting that the Jews and their ancestors might be equated with *all* persons of virtue and wisdom, whether Jewish or not.

As is the case with Philo's expression of particularist views, noted above, his expression of universalist views can be found as well in other, non-allegorical parts of his work. In several passages, for example, Philo praises non-Jewish thinkers and philosophers, observing at one point that “what the disciples of the most excellent philosophy gain from its teaching, the Jews gain from their customs and laws,” that is, to know the true God and to reject false deities (*Virt.* 65).³²

²⁹ For a fuller discussion of Philo's treatment of the covenant and of *Sacr.* 57, see Birnbaum, *The Place of Judaism* 132–33 and 134–35.

³⁰ Birnbaum, *The Place of Judaism* 91–159.

³¹ All these concepts—virtue, seeing God, and grace—are much too broad to allow for comprehensive discussion here, but all three can be found in the Hebrew Bible itself. On virtue, see, e.g., Gen 18:19, Ps 106:3, and many other verses with the word צדקה. Passages about seeing God include Gen 32:25–33; Exod 24:9–11, 33:12–23. On divine grace, see, e.g., Exod 33:19, Ps 67:2, and many other verses with the word חן.

³² See also, e.g., *Spec.* 2.44–48; *Aet.* 16, 52; *Prob.* 2, 13, 53, 73, 74, 98, 109, 140.

From passages such as these—as well as from allegorizations such as those just discussed—one might understand that Philo equates Jewish and non-Jewish paths to the one, true God.

Reflections of Contemporary Alexandria?

In the allegorical interpretations we have just been discussing, it is difficult to identify the virtuous, the wise, and those who see God with a specific social group, particularly in Alexandria. Indeed in these interpretations, Philo seems to have in mind a group that transcends ethnic and political definitions and is defined by intellectual and spiritual qualities alone. An important question therefore is whether any of Philo's allegorical interpretations can be understood to apply to contemporary social groups in Alexandria and, if so, what these interpretations may tell us about his self-perception as a Jew within the broader Alexandrian society.

A number of scholars have argued that one can in fact detect social and political circumstances in Philo's allegorizations. Especially notable, for example, are the studies of Peder Borgen, who has argued persuasively that one must take these circumstances into account when reading Philo's scriptural commentaries, particularly his treatises on Moses and those in the Exposition series.³³ Indeed Borgen demonstrates correspondences between these circumstances and Philo's exegetical commentaries that go well beyond allegorical interpretations alone, our present focus. Among Borgen's examples of Philo's allegorizations is his interpretation of Hagar as a symbol of the encyclical studies; Borgen argues convincingly that this interpretation reflects Philo's attitude toward secular education in his Alexandrian environment.³⁴

³³ This perspective, expressed in several of Borgen's studies, is especially emphasized in his recent book *Philo of Alexandria: An Exegete for His Time*, *NovTSup* 86 (Leiden: Brill, 1997).

³⁴ As Borgen notes, this allegorization is drawn from a similar interpretation of Homer's account of Penelope and her maids: "This transformation of Penelope and her maids into Sarah and Hagar meant that Philo produced a parallel interpretation within a Jewish context, to express a Jewish point of view regarding encyclical education . . . which the Jews have in common with their pagan surroundings. . . . [T]he encyclical education, Hagar, is a sojourner and servant to knowledge, and wisdom and every virtue (Sarah = virtue), which are native born, indigenous, citizens in the truest sense, *Congr.* 22–23. Thus, the encyclical education may be used to serve Jewish ideals and wisdom (*Congr.* 74–6), or can be misused to lead persons

Another scholar who has drawn links between Philo's allegorical interpretations and contemporary social and political circumstances in Alexandria is Robert Kraft. Kraft suggests that the ambivalent interpretations of Joseph in Philo's *Allegorical Commentary* may reflect his attitude toward his own nephew Tiberius Julius Alexander, who—though born a Jew—rose to power under the Romans and became governor of Egypt in 66 CE.³⁵

Similarly, Wayne Meeks has suggested that Philo's portrayals of Moses and of the Exodus may echo the contemporary situation of Jews in Egypt.³⁶ Both Meeks and Dawson have mentioned in particular Philo's allegorization of the burning bush from Exod 3.³⁷ This interpretation (*Mos.* 1.65–70) is worth looking at more closely. In section 66, Philo suggests that the appearance in the bush be called that of an angel, *aggelos*, or herald, who delivers a message about the future. Philo explains this message as follows: the burning bush is a symbol of the oppressed, the fire is a symbol of the oppressors, and the fact that the bush was not consumed is a symbol that “the sufferers would not be destroyed by their aggressors” (*Mos.* 1.67). The angel itself symbolizes God's providence, “which all silently brings relief to the greatest dangers, exceeding every hope” (*Mos.* 1.67).

away from them (cf. *Leg. all.* 3:167)” (*Exegete*, 163–64). See also A. Mendelson, *Secular Education in Philo of Alexandria*, Monographs of the Hebrew Union College 7 (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College, 1982) esp. 42–46. A similar indication of Philo's attitude toward his cultural surroundings can be discerned in his allegorical interpretation in *Ebr.* 20–26 (T. Seland, “Philo and the Clubs and Associations of Alexandria,” in *Voluntary Associations in the Graeco-Roman World*, ed. J. S. Kloppenborg and S. G. Wilson (London-New York: Routledge, 1996) 117–25).

³⁵ R. A. Kraft, “Philo and the Sabbath Crisis: Alexandrian Jewish Politics and the Dating of Philo's Works,” in *The Future of Early Christianity: Essays in Honor of Helmut Koester*, ed. B. A. Pearson et al. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991) 131–41. See also D. R. Schwartz, “Philonian Anonyms of the Roman and Nazi Periods: Two Suggestions,” *SPhilo* 1 (1989) 63–69; E. R. Goodenough, *The Politics of Philo Judaeus: Practice and Theory* (New Haven: Yale University, 1938) esp. 21–41; and Hay, “Politics and Exegesis,” 23 429–38. Though Schwartz does not address Philo's allegorizations, he—like Kraft—believes that Philo has his own nephew in mind when he relates an incident in *Somn.* 2.123–32. Goodenough believes some of Philo's allegorical interpretations, including those of Joseph and Jethro, contain encoded references to Roman rulers in Egypt, who probably preceded Flaccus. Without identifying the specific circumstances, Hay contends that Philo's allegorizations in *De Somniis* conveyed political messages to his fellow Jews.

³⁶ W. A. Meeks, “The Divine Agent and His Counterfeit in Philo and the Fourth Gospel,” in *Aspects of Religious Propaganda in Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. E. Schüssler Fiorenza (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1976) 45–54.

³⁷ Meeks, “Divine Agent” 49; Dawson, *Allegorical Readers* 112–13.

Through all these symbols, Philo understands the message of the bush to be an encouragement to the oppressed: “Do not lose heart; . . . Nay, just when the enemy is sure of ravaging you, your fame will shine forth most gloriously” (*Mos.* 1.69).

This is an unusual allegorization for Philo, who typically assigns to biblical details such abstract philosophical meanings as virtue, the mind, the soul, wisdom, or passions. Here the referents are the nation, its oppressors, and the providence of God. It takes little imagination to apply this interpretation to the Jews suffering at the hands of their Alexandrian oppressors in Philo’s own time. Although this interpretation is quite suggestive, however, of the violent events under Flaccus and Gaius that Philo himself describes in his historical treatises (*In Flaccum* and *De Legatione ad Gaium*), we have no evidence that would allow us to determine conclusively that these particular circumstances were in fact behind his interpretation.

One other example of an allegorization that may reflect contemporary social or political realities in Alexandria can be found in a brief and easily overlooked interpretation in *Congr.* 118. This passage appears in a string of interpretations in which Philo praises the qualities of the number ten. He writes,

Again rebellious Egypt, when it glorified the mind which usurps the place of God (*antitheos nous*), and bestowed on it the emblems of sovereignty, the throne, the sceptre, the diadem, is admonished through ten plagues and punishments by the Guardian and Ruler of all.

The ten plagues, of course, are easily recognizable from the Bible, but what does Philo mean when he scolds “rebellious Egypt” for glorifying “the mind which usurps the place of God”? We know from Philo’s other interpretations that the *antitheos nous*—the mind hostile to God or the mind equal to God (the word *antitheos* allows for both definitions)—is elsewhere given as an allegorization of Pharaoh.³⁸ In the Bible, however, the ten plagues were visited upon

³⁸ *Conf.* 88 (in which the reference is to the king of Egypt but Pharaoh is not named explicitly) and *Somn.* 2.183. The adjective *antitheos* is also used to describe the king of Egypt in *Fug.* 140, in which the adjective modifies *tropos*, character, rather than *nous*. In *Post.* 57, the *antitheos nous* is associated with Cain. The only other occurrence of *antitheos* is in *Post.* 123, in which the word modifies *kairos*, “moment,” and is not linked with a biblical character. In the manuscripts, an alternative reading to *antitheon* in *Congr.* 118 is *antitheton*, opposed or antithetical (Colson and Whitaker, *Philo*, 5:518, n. 1; see also P. Wendland, *Philonis Alexandrini: Opera*

Egypt not because Pharaoh's subjects honored him, as Philo is claiming here, but because Pharaoh refused to let the people of Israel go!³⁹

Philo's interpretation thus does not appear to be based upon anything in the Bible. Instead, I would suggest that here again, he may be introducing events of his day to illuminate the past. The mind hostile to God or equal to God could well refer to the Emperor Gaius (37–41 CE), whose claim to divinity fits both senses of the word *antitheos*.⁴⁰ In this passage, then, one might understand "rebellious Egypt" to refer to Philo's non-Jewish contemporaries, namely, the Alexandrians, or a combination of the Alexandrians and the Egyptians,⁴¹ who acknowledged Gaius as divine and who went as far as setting up images of him in the synagogues. Another feature of this interpretation, which fits nicely with Philo's contemporary Alexandria, is his reference to God as the *epitropos*, or Guardian, of all. This epithet provides a contrast to Flaccus, whose title as ruler of Egypt was also *epitropos*. In his historical treatises, Philo took this Roman ruler to task for not stopping the anti-Jewish activities of the Alexandrian mob (*Flacc.* 40, 43; *Legat.* 132).⁴²

Again, although such a correlation between Philo's allegorization and contemporary events in Alexandria is an attractive suggestion, without further evidence, we cannot conclude decisively whether the correlation is real or not. It is difficult, moreover, to determine what

Quae Supersunt [Berlin: G. Reimer, 1898] 3:96). *antitheon* would seem the more likely reading, however, given its similar use elsewhere. *antithetos* appears in Philo's works only twice (*Det.* 38 and *Praem.* 52) and is used differently. On these two words in Philo's writings, see P. Borgen et al., *The Philo Index: A Complete Greek Word Index to the Writings of Philo of Alexandria* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans and Leiden: Brill, 2000) 35.

³⁹ Exod 7:14–18; 8:1–2, 20–21; 9:1–2, 13–19; 10:3–5.

⁴⁰ The alternative reading *antitheton*, opposed or antithetical (see n. 38), would also serve to describe Gaius but less specifically.

⁴¹ On the composition of the non-Jewish population that opposed the Jews in Alexandria, see Birnbaum, "Philo on the Greeks" 48–52.

⁴² Goodenough too finds significance in Philo's use of *epitropos* and believes that when he uses this word to describe Joseph in *Somn.* 2.42, Philo intends an implied reference to the Roman ruler in Egypt, though not specifically Flaccus (*The Politics of Philo Judaeus*, 22–23, 29). Besides the Alexandrians' acknowledgment of Gaius as a god, there is another incident that may possibly lie behind this interpretation in *Congr.* 118. In *Flacc.* 36–40, Philo tells how the Alexandrian mob set up the madman Carabas to deride the Jewish king Agrippa. In describing this incident, Philo uses language similar to that found in *Congr.* 118. In *Flacc.* 38, for example, Philo speaks of Carabas as receiving *ta parasema tes basileias* ("the insignia of kingship" or "the emblems of sovereignty," cf. *Congr.* 118). Philo also specifically mentions the mock scepter and diadem given to Carabas, but he does not mention a throne.

the controls are for claiming such correlations. Borgen has pointed out linguistic and thematic correspondences between Philo's exegetical writings and his historical ones, and these correspondences are certainly persuasive.⁴³ Short of our discovering irrefutable indications, however, our collective suggested correlations remain speculative and may not ultimately be provable.

Regardless of our inability to prove these correspondences, if the various suggestions cited above are indeed correct that Philo's allegorical interpretations contain encoded reflections of the contemporary social and political situation in Alexandria, then, as Kraft has noted, some of us may have to reconsider when Philo composed his works and perhaps even when he lived.⁴⁴ The conventional dates assigned to Philo—usually 20 BCE to 50 CE—are based upon Philo's description of himself as an old man in the introduction to his treatise about his embassy to Emperor Gaius, which took place in 39 or 40 CE. The reasoning goes that if Philo was an old man when he wrote about this embassy, perhaps in the early 40s of the first century, then he probably did not live much past 50 CE.

The various allegorical interpretations discussed above can be found in both the Allegorical Commentary and the *Life of Moses*.⁴⁵ If these interpretations do in fact pertain to circumstances in Alexandria at the end of the fourth decade CE or even later, then this would suggest that Philo composed these exegetical treatises as well during the forties or later.⁴⁶ While I can offer no solution to this question of

⁴³ Borgen, *Exegete*, esp. Chapters 8–13, 140–242.

⁴⁴ Kraft, "Philo and the Sabbath Crisis," 140–41; *idem*, "Tiberius Julius Alexander and the Crisis in Alexandria According to Josephus," in *Of Scribes and Scrolls: Studies on the Hebrew Bible, Intertestamental Judaism, and Christian Origins Presented to John Strugnell on the Occasion of his Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. H. W. Attridge, J. J. Collins, and T. H. Tobin, College Theology Society Resources in Religion 5 (Lanham: University Press of America, 1990) 175–84.

⁴⁵ As noted earlier, Borgen draws extensive parallels between Philo's historical treatises and treatises in the Exposition, and these parallels encompass more than Philo's allegorical interpretations (*Exegete*, esp. Chapters 8–13, 140–242). For other examples of non-allegorical interpretations which may reflect contemporary realities in Alexandria, see also Birnbaum, *The Place of Judaism*, 103–5, 123 (on *Mos.* 2.196); 179–83 (on *Abr.* 98); Meeks, "The Divine Agent," 48 (on *Mos.* 1.30–31 and 34–37).

⁴⁶ It is also possible that Philo subsequently added certain sections (e.g., *Congr.* 118) to treatises he had composed earlier. On this possibility, see too Schwartz, "Philonic Anonyms," 65. The attempt to date Philo's works in relation to his life and to events in Alexandria is not new. See, e.g., L. Cohn, "Einteilung und Chronologie der Schriften Philos," *Philologus*, Supplementband 7.387–436, and M. Masebieau and E. Bréhier, "Essai sur la chronologie de la vie et des oeuvres de Philon," *RHR*

dating Philo's works and life, the question itself is inevitable if we try to correlate Philo's allegorical interpretations with contemporaneous events in Alexandria.

Before we turn from Philo, let us remember that we have been considering only a sample of his allegorical interpretations, namely, those that in some way reflect his attitude toward non-Jews. Philo's range of allegorizations is so broad, however, that it also encompasses many "neutral" interpretations, i.e., ones that carry no expression of attitudes toward others.⁴⁷ Indeed because our sampling of relevant passages is but a small representation of Philo's interpretations and his works as a whole, it is difficult to draw conclusions about his intended audience(s) based upon these interpretations alone.

From another perspective, however, it is worth noting that—whether within the allegorical interpretations or not—the characteristics we have been discussing can be found in Philo's works that are generally assumed to be directed toward both internal and external audiences.⁴⁸ These characteristics include Philo's expression of Jewish superiority; his universalization of Israel, the chosen people, and the covenant; and encoded reflections of contemporary Alexandrian

53 (1906), 25–64, 162–85, 267–89. For an overview of the discussion, see J. Morris, "The Jewish Philosopher Philo," in E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 BC–AD 135)*, rev. ed. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1987) 3.2:841–44. In addition to the observations of Kraft and Schwartz, A. Terian has suggested that "perhaps most of Philo's literary career belongs to the closing years of his life, to the period following the political turmoils described in Flacc and Gaium [sic]" (*Philonis Alexandrini De Animalibus: The Armenian Text with an Introduction, Translation, and Commentary*, Studies in Hellenistic Judaism: Supplements to Studia Philonica 1 [Chico: Scholars Press, 1981] 34; see Terian's larger discussion and the references he cites, 28–34.)

⁴⁷ Examples of such "neutral" allegorizations with respect to non-Jews can be found, e.g., in Philo's interpretation of the creation of man, as discussed by Tobin in *The Creation of Man*.

⁴⁸ It is generally accepted that Philo's treatises on Moses as well as his treatises in the Exposition series were directed toward people unfamiliar with Moses and the Jews. Such an audience could have included Jews as well as non-Jews. The treatises in the Allegorical Commentary, on the other hand, were probably aimed at sophisticated and well-educated Jews who were quite familiar with Jewish tradition. On Philo's various audiences, see my discussion in *The Place of Judaism*, 17–21, and references cited there. Since writing those arguments, I have been persuaded that Philo's treatises on Moses should be seen as separate from but related to his Exposition series, though I continue to believe that both sets of works were directed toward both Jews and non-Jews. See A. C. Geljon, "Moses as Example: The Philonic Background of Gregory of Nyssa's *De Vita Moysis*" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Leiden, 2000) 1–46.

realities. That these characteristics are so widespread throughout his works suggests that we cannot draw specific conclusions about any of these characteristics based upon Philo's intended readership. Instead, one finds in his works views that are both particularist and universalist, that express both that the Jews are superior to others and that they are equal to others. Between these two stances, resolution is not easily achieved.⁴⁹

5. Conclusion

In studying the role allegorical interpretations play in expressing various aspects of Jewish identity in relation to non-Jews, we have seen that in the case of Aristeas, allegorical interpretations can be used to reinforce a sense of Jewish distinction and superiority; and in the case of Artistobulus, they can be used to protect ways of talking about God without any specific function vis-à-vis Jewish identity. In Philo's works allegorical interpretations can express a sense of superiority—as in *Somn.* 1.55–60, the passage about Socrates, Terah, and Abraham—but these interpretations can also universalize particular aspects related to Israel, the chosen people, and the covenant, in order to embrace all wise or virtuous people. Philo's range of allegorical interpretations is so broad, moreover, that it encompasses, in addition, interpretations that are simply neutral with regard to Jewish identity. As for Dawson's argument that allegorical interpretations subordinate Greek meanings to Scripture, we have found this to be true in some but not all cases. Finally in Aristeas and especially in Philo, allegorical interpretations may also reflect contemporary social

⁴⁹ Scholars have attempted to address the tensions between particularism and universalism in Philo's writings in a variety of ways. See, e.g., Birnbaum, *The Place of Judaism* 224–30; Borgen, "Philo of Alexandria" 150–54; *idem*, *Exegete*, esp. Chapters 12–15, 206–281; Goudriaan, "Ethnical Strategies" 83–84; Mendelson, *Philo's Jewish Identity* 113, 115–38; D. Winston, "Judaism and Hellenism: Hidden Tensions in Philo's Thought," *SPhilo* 2 (1990) 1–19, esp. 18. G. E. Sterling aptly characterizes the difficulty as follows: "We must now ask whether Philo was a universal particularist (a particularist who opened Judaism to all), a particularistic universalist (a universalist who believed that Judaism was the best but not the exclusive expression of how humanity understands the divine), or someone who was a universalist in intellectual views but a particularist in social practices and never resolved the tension between the two" (Review of Birnbaum, *The Place of Judaism*, *SPhilo* 10 [1998] 194).

and political realities, but it is difficult to ascertain decisively whether correlations are actual or merely possible.

Beyond allegorical interpretations, however, these Alexandrian Jewish writers also express other views about Jews and non-Jews in other—non-allegorical—parts of their work. Thus Aristeeas proclaims that Jews and non-Jews worship the same God, and he shows Jews quite at home with Greeks and Greek culture. Aristobulus declares that Greek thinkers and writers took their wisdom from Moses, thereby subordinating Greeks to Jews. Finally, Philo expresses both particularist and universalist views in various different ways.

What then can we say about the role of allegorical interpretations in reflecting Jewish identity among Alexandrian Jewish writers? To be sure, this kind of interpretation can serve as a vehicle of expression for their attitudes toward other cultures and peoples, but the expression itself may be of either superiority to or equality with other cultures and peoples, and the same work may carry interpretations that express both of these positions or neither of these positions. Above all, this kind of interpretation provides us with but one key among many to understanding a writer's stance on these complex and perhaps unresolvable issues; for a thorough assessment, we must go beyond allegorical interpretations to consider all parts of the writer's work.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ In November 2001, I delivered an earlier version of this paper before the Hellenistic Moral Philosophy and Early Christianity Section at the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting in Denver, Colorado. I would like to thank those present for their helpful comments and questions. In addition to the individuals mentioned in notes 1 and 13, I would also like to thank Professor Diana Lobel for reading this paper and discussing it with me.

FOILS FOR THE THERAPEUTAE: REFERENCES
TO OTHER TEXTS AND PERSONS IN PHILO'S
"DE VITA CONTEMPLATIVA"

David M. Hay

Much of the modern discussion of Philo's treatise *On the Contemplative Life* (*De vita contemplativa*)¹ has hinged on two historical questions: assuming that the Therapeutae he describes were a Jewish group existing in the vicinity of Alexandria in his lifetime, how were they related to the Essenes (whom he describes in other treatises) and what was the history of the Therapeutae themselves?² Though Philo seems to idealize the Therapeutae and may sometimes color his descriptions with his own views, most modern scholars have concluded that he is describing an actual Jewish community in Egypt.³

The following essay will bracket these important historical questions about what lies behind Philo's text. We will focus, rather, on exploring some of the literary features of the treatise itself, giving primary attention to its references to texts, groups, and individuals other than the Therapeutae.

It is a special pleasure to contribute this essay to a volume honoring Peder Borgen. Since publishing his doctoral dissertation, he has been an international leader in Philonic studies, pioneering new approaches to the comparative study of Jewish and Christian exegesis, first-century eschatology, and the social history of Alexandrian Judaism.

¹ When citing particular passages within the treatise, I will use the abbreviation *Contempl.*—relying on the system of abbreviations developed for the *Studia Philonica Annual* and utilized in the best available concordance: P. Borgen, K. Fuglseth, and R. Skarsten, *The Philo Index* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000).

² E.g., an interesting recent article hypothesizes that the origin of the group, with its remarkable emphasis on the participation of women, was linked with local Egyptian traditions honoring Isis and Osiris: P. Richardson and V. Heuchan, "Jewish Voluntary Associations in Egypt and the Roles of Women," in J. S. Kloppenborg and S. G. Wilson (eds.), *Voluntary Associations in the Graeco-Roman World* (London: Routledge, 1996) 226–51.

³ See, e.g., P. Geoltrain, *Le traité de la Vie Contemplative de Philon d'Alexandrie: Introduction, traduction et notes* (Semitica X; Paris: Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1960), 25–26. For a recent fresh attempt to explain Philo's treatise as a fictional account of a utopian group, see T. Engberg-Pedersen, "Philo's *De Vita Contemplativa* as a Philosopher's Dream," *JStJ* 30 (1999) 40–64.

Many years ago he welcomed me to the Philo Seminar of the Society of New Testament Studies (*Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas*). His friendship and scholarly integrity have been a continual source of inspiration.

1. *Literary Structure and Rhetorical Devices*

The general structure of *On the Contemplative Life* shows clarity and artistic refinement. The following outline builds on the analysis of Geoltrain,⁴ though it adds some details and highlights some repetitious elements:

1. The Therapeutae in general (1–20)
 - (a) introductory comparison with Essenes (1)
 - (b) interpretations of the name of the group (2)
 - (c) their worship contrasted with varieties of pagan worship (3–10)
 - (d) their vocation and abandonment of property (11–17)
 - (e) their rejection of urban life and its bad associations (18–20)
2. The particular Therapeutae community above Lake Mareotis (21–39)
 - (a) the physical location and its advantages (21–24)
 - (b) their activities:
 - (1) individual study and meditation on God
 - contemplation in private sanctuaries (25–26)
 - morning and evening prayers (27)
 - allegorical study of sacred scriptures (28–29)
 - (2) group meetings on the seventh day (30–33)
 - discourse by a senior, without rhetorical display (31)
 - inclusion of women—separated from men (32–33)
 - (c) their self-control: simplicity in diet (bread, salt, hyssop, water), clothing, and shelter (34–39)
3. The evils of some other people's banquets (40–63)
 - (a) intoxication leading to violence (40–44)
 - (b) intoxication leading to insensibility and ruin of lives (45–47)
 - (c) luxury: furnishings, young male slaves, foods (48–56)
 - (d) the foolish banquets reported by Xenophon and Plato (57–63)

⁴ Geoltrain, *Le traité de la Vie Contemplative*, 15–16.

4. The banquets of the Therapeutae (64–89)
 - (a) based on the instructions of Moses (64)
 - (b) occur on the 50th day (65)
 - (c) initial group prayer (66)
 - (d) order of reclining (67)
 - (e) the presence of women (68)—separated from men (69)
 - (f) the simplicity of their couches (69)
 - (f) the free young men who serve at tables like sons serving common parents—rejection of slavery (70–72)
 - (g) food and drink: water, bread, salt, hyssop (73–74)
 - (h) the discourse of the President, without rhetorical display (75–77)
 - (i) the allegorical method used by the Therapeutae (78–79)
 - (j) singing of hymns (80)
 - (k) the meal: bread, salt, hyssop (81–82)
 - (l) the sacred vigil, with hymn singing and dancing modeled on that led by Moses and Miriam at the Red Sea—men and women first separate, then mixed into a single choir (83–89)
5. Conclusion: The Therapeutae reach supreme happiness (90)

Reviewing the order of topics as they are presented in the treatise, one is struck by the amount of space given to persons other than the Therapeutae. The descriptions of pagan worship in §§3–10 and bad banquets in §§40–62 fill well over a quarter of the entire treatise. Further, the reader cannot avoid noticing the harsh criticism generally meted out to pagans in this treatise, not least Xenophon and Plato.

On the other hand, while the treatise offers many details about the lifestyle and religious activities of the Therapeutae who reside near Alexandria, it says nothing directly about their relationship to Jews in Alexandria (including Philo himself). Moreover, it only gradually makes the Jewish identity of the Therapeutae unmistakably clear. For example, §§25 and 28 describe the intensive study the Therapeutae devote to their “sacred writings,” but only in §§63–64 does Philo plainly identify these scriptures as Mosaic (cf. §§85–87).

The treatise offers two lengthy descriptions of the Therapeutae community, the first broken off by Philo’s remarking that he wants to go on to describe their banquets but feels he must first describe some bad ones (§40). After a protracted presentation on that subject (§§40–63), he returns to the Therapeutae, devoting the last part of

the treatise almost entirely to their 50th-day banquets (§§64–89). There are somewhat odd instances of repetition in the descriptions of the Therapeutae: their allegorical interpretation of the scriptures (§§28–29, 78–79), the impressive speeches of their leaders which avoid rhetorical display (31, 75–77), their meager diet (34–37, 73–74, 81–82), the presence of women who are usually separated from the men (§§32–33, 68–69).

Nevertheless, *On the Contemplative Life* generally gives the impression of a carefully designed and executed presentation. Writing with his usual rich vocabulary and complex (but not awkward) grammatical structures, Philo displays throughout the treatise his mastery of literary Greek.⁵ A strong case can be made for identifying the rhetorical genre of the treatise as a whole as that of an encomium, celebrating the particular community of Therapeutae and Therapeutrides living just above Lake Mareotis.⁶

Manuel Alexander, Jr. has recently analyzed the main sections of the treatise and argued that Philo shows great rhetorical mastery in the overall structure of *On the Contemplative Life* and in the details of its various sections. For example, he analyzes §§11–17 as follows:

Praise of the Therapeutae (11–12)—they seek the vision of God
The Chreia (13a): The Therapeutae give their possessions to family. . . .

Rationale (13b): Material wealth is valueless to those with spiritual vision

Statement from the opposite (14): Anaxagoras and Democritus acted thoughtlessly

Statement from analogy (15): Democritus acted like a hostile army ravaging a countryside

Statement from example (16): The Therapeutae did not destroy their property

Statement by an authority (16b–17a): quotations from Hippocrates and Homer

⁵ The debate at the end of the 19th century about *On the Contemplative Life*'s authenticity led to a demonstration that the treatise is very close to Philo's other writings in literary style as well as substance. See Geoltrain, *Le Traité de la Vie Contemplative*, 13–14.

⁶ See, e.g., D. Winston, *Philo of Alexandria: The Contemplative Life, the Giants, and Selections* (Classics of Western Spirituality; New York: Paulist, 1981) 41.

Brief exhortation (17b): Money-making breeds inequality and injustice.

Philo thus demonstrates communication skills akin to those of the leaders of the Therapeutae, whom he describes as avoiding rhetorical displays but nonetheless speaking with extraordinary effectiveness (*Contempl.* 31, 75–77). Alexandre further contends that the combination of narrative and argumentation in the treatise indicates that Philo's intent is not only to provide information about the Therapeutae but also to

persuade, convince, and move into action those Jews who were losing the essence of their faith and being identified with the pagan system of the day in a slow process of domesticating or reconfiguring their own Jewish identity, even at the risk of being completely assimilated by the Hellenistic culture.⁷

Some of Philo's other rhetorical devices for characterizing pagans may be briefly noted. Paragraphs dealing with pagan religiosity are introduced with a series of similar rhetorical questions:

“Who among those who profess piety deserve to be compared with these (the Therapeutae)? Can we compare those who revere the elements . . . ?” (§3)

“What of the worshippers of the bodies framed from the elements, sun, moon, or the other stars . . . ?” (§5)

“What of the worship of the demi-gods?” (§6)

“What of the worshippers of different kinds of images?” (§7)⁸

At the end of the paragraphs on false piety is one devoted to the apparently worst form, Egyptian animal worship; and here Philo uses sharp antitheses to point up the folly and degradation:

. . . they render worship to them [the animals],
they the civilized to the uncivilized and untamed,
the reasonable to the irrational,
the kinsfolk of the Godhead to ugliness unmatched even by a
Thersites,⁹
the rulers and masters to the naturally subservient and slavish. (§9)

⁷ See M. Alexandre, Jr., “The Eloquent Philosopher in Philo's *De Vita Contemplativa*,” *Euphrosyne* 29 (2001) 319–330.

⁸ All translations are from F. H. Colson, *Philo* 9 (Loeb Classical Library; Cambridge: Harvard University, 1941).

⁹ The allusion is to Homer (*Iliad* 2.216ff.). Thersites is also mentioned as a model of ugliness by Hippocrates, Plutarch, and Clement (see Colson, *Philo* 9:118–19).

Another antithetical formulation employs a sardonic sports comparison:

... what the athletes do in the arena while sober, in the daylight, with the eyes of all Greece upon them, in the hope of victory and the crown and in the exercise of their skill, are debased by the revelers who ply their activities in convivial gatherings by night... only for mischief to inflict dishonour, insult and grievous outrage on the objects of their assault.” (§42)

Logical or rhetorical progression appears in the listing of forms of pagan piety in §§3–10 (from best to worst) and the descriptions of banquets in §§40–62 (from worst to best).

In contrast to such descriptions of pagan folly, we find at the beginning and end of the treatise these lyrical praises of the Therapeutae:

But it is well that the Therapeutae, a people always taught from the first to use their sight, should desire the vision of the Existent and soar above the sun of our senses and never leave their place in this company which carries them on to perfect happiness (τελεία εὐδαιμονία—§11)

Lovely are the thoughts, lovely the words and worthy of reverence the choristers, and the end and aim of thoughts, words and choristers alike is piety. * * * So much then for the Therapeutae, who have taken to their hearts the contemplation of nature and what it has to teach, and have lived in the soul alone, citizens of Heaven and the world, presented to the Father and Maker of all by their faithful sponsor Virtue, who has procured for them God's friendship and added a gift going hand in hand with it, true excellence of life, a boon better than all good fortune and rising to the very summit of felicity (εὐδαιμονία) (§§88, 90)

David T. Runia has explored at length Philo's concept of happiness as applied to the Therapeutae and his use of the literary device of “ring-composition” in these passages. He also calls attention to similar conclusions emphasizing happiness in other Philonic writings: *Prob.* 91; *Opif.* 172; *Post.* 185; *Ebr.* 224; *Somn.* 1.256; *Spec.* 1.345; *Virt.* 50).¹⁰

Given the rhetorical expertise Philo demonstrates throughout the treatise, one must suppose that the style and content of his references to other texts and persons other than the Therapeutae are carefully determined.

¹⁰ D. T. Runia, “The Reward for Goodness: Philo, *De Vita Contemplativa* 90,” *SPhilo* 9 (1997) 3–18.

2. *References to Other Texts*

Without directly quoting from any, Philo refers to a series of Jewish texts in *On the Contemplative Life*: another treatise of his own dealing with the Essenes, the Jewish scriptures, exegetical writings by the founders of the Therapeutae, hymns and psalms composed by the Therapeutae, and (perhaps) the speeches of their leaders.¹¹

Philo begins by mentioning that he has already written about the Essenes:

I have discussed the Essenes, who persistently pursued the active life and excelled in all or, to put it more moderately, in most of its departments. I will now proceed at once in accordance with the sequence required by the subject to say what is needed about those who embraced the life of contemplation.

Given the length of the description of the Therapeutae which follows, one would think Philo would here be alluding to a treatise of comparable length and detail on the Essenes. That does not seem to fit either of his surviving descriptions of the Essenes (in *Prob.* 75–91 and *Hypoth.* 11:1–18) very well. Moreover, the qualification that the Essenes did not excel in all departments of the active life does not appear in those extant accounts. It seems likely, therefore, that this passage alludes to another Philonic treatise that has not survived.¹²

It is in any case clear that there are some striking similarities as well as differences between what Philo says about the Essenes in the two extant reports and the Therapeutae.¹³ Even where the two groups differ according to Philo, the topics he chooses to discuss are similar: likeness to other groups (*Prob.* 72–74; *Contempl.* 21), places of residence (*Prob.* 76; *Hypoth.* 11.1; *Contempl.* 19–23), interpretation of group name (*Prob.* 75; *Hypoth.* 11.1; *Contempl.* 2), how one joins the community (*Hypoth.* 11.3; *Contempl.* 18), frugality and freedom from

¹¹ Philo does not indicate if the speakers described in §§31, 75–78 speak extemporaneously or rely on notes or complete texts.

¹² In support of this view, see K. Bormann, “Über das betrachtende Leben,” in L. Cohn *et al.* (eds.), *Philo of Alexandria: Die Werke in deutscher Übersetzung*, Bd. 7 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1964) 44, n. 1. F. Daumas, however, argues that *Contempl.* 1 refers to *Hypoth.* 11:1–18 (F. Daumas and P. Miquel, *De Vita Contemplativa* [Les œuvres de Philon d’Alexandrie 29; Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1963] 11–12).

¹³ See the concise analysis in E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ*, vol. 2, rev. and ed. G. Vermes, F. Millar, M. Black (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1979) 593–94.

money cares (*Prob.* 76–78; *Hypoth.* 11.4–11; *Contempl.* 13–17, 34–39), meals (*Hypoth.* 11.5; *Contempl.* 37, 63–89), clothing (*Hypoth.* 11.12; *Contempl.* 38), housing (*Prob.* 85; *Contempl.* 24–25, 38), rejection of slavery (*Prob.* 79; *Hypoth.* 11.4; *Contempl.* 70), devotion to one branch of philosophy (*Prob.* 80; *Contempl.* 67), central beliefs about God (*Prob.* 84; *Contempl.* 2), allegorical study of scriptures (*Prob.* 81–82; *Contempl.* 28–29, 75–78), love of fellowship within the community (*Prob.* 84–86, 91; *Hypoth.* 11.1–2; *Contempl.* 24), celibacy (*Hypoth.* 11.14–17; *Contempl.* 68), care for the elderly (*Prob.* 87; *Hypoth.* 11.13; *Contempl.* 72), concluding praise (*Prob.* 91; *Hypoth.* 11.18; *Contempl.* 90).

Many of the specific details are bolstered by warrants or rationales, with the suggestion in most cases that these rationales come from the groups themselves (rather than from Philo). Thus the celibacy of the Essenes is briefly described and then an extended explanation is given, one centering on women's selfishness and seductiveness (*Hypoth.* 11.14–17). By contrast, *On the Contemplative Life* emphasizes the presence of women in the Therapeutae, explaining that they have "the same ardor and the same sense of their calling" as the men (§32).¹⁴ Neither group holds slaves, and this policy is justified with Stoic-like assertions about the natural equality of all persons (*Prob.* 79; *Contempl.* 70).¹⁵

The primary Jewish texts referred to in *On the Contemplative Life* are the Jewish scriptures, though they are never quoted. These are mentioned in §25 as laws, prophetic oracles, psalms and other writings.

¹⁴ *On the Contemplative Life* is remarkable for its apparent assumption that women are about equally capable of high virtue as men (see also §68). If *On the Contemplative Life* was written as a kind of companion piece to the account of the Essenes in *Hypoth.*, it is odd that Philo simply presented two drastically different assessments of women's spiritual capacities without comment. Of course even in *On the Contemplative Life* Philo does not present a gender neutral position. R. Kraemer points out that the treatise associates the Therapeutae of both sexes with "manly virtue" and pagan vices with effeminacy ("The Other as Woman: An Aspect of Polemic among Pagans, Jews and Christians in the Greco-Roman World," in L. J. Silberstein and R. L. Cohn, *The Other in Jewish Thought and History* (New York: New York University, 1994) 134–35. H. Szesnat thinks Philo did not himself approve of the women in the Therapeutae community ("Mostly Aged Virgins": Philo and the Presence of The Therapeutrides at Lake Mareotis," *Neotestamentica* 32/1 [1998] 191–201).

¹⁵ This emphasis on equality among the Therapeutae does not prevent their giving careful attention to seating positions and arranging for young men to serve their elders. Taylor and Davies argue that the young men may have done all the physical and administrative labor needed to support the community (J. E. Taylor, J. E. and P. R. Davies, "The So-Called Therapeutae of *De Vita Contemplativa*: Identity and Character," *HTR* 91 [1998] 20–23).

In §64 Philo says the Therapeutae follow “the truly sacred instructions of the prophet Moses.” In §§85–87 their choral dancing is said to be modeled on that of the Israelites at the Red Sea as led by the prophets Moses and Miriam. A reference to salt in §81 suggests that the Therapeutae relied on the LXX rather than the Hebrew text.¹⁶

The general hermeneutical approach of the Therapeutae emphasized allegorical interpretation of the scriptures, though the analogy of the living animal¹⁷ suggests that they did not repudiate the literal meaning:

... to these people the whole law book seems to resemble a living creature with the literal ordinances for its body and for its soul the invisible mind laid up in its wording. It is in this mind especially that the rational soul begins to contemplate the things akin to itself and looking through the words as through a mirror beholds the marvelous beauties of the concepts, unfolds and removes the symbolic coverings and brings forth the thoughts and sets them bare to the light of day for those who need but a little reminding to enable them to discern the inward and hidden through the outward and visible. (§78)¹⁸

Their use of food in relation to the laws concerning the bread of the presence (§81) and their ritual dancing in imitation of the events of Exodus 15 also suggest that the Therapeutae, like Philo himself, regularly affirmed both literal and allegorical levels of interpretation, though giving preference to the latter.

Philo also refers to writings produced by the Therapeutae:

They have also writings of men of old, the founders of their way of thinking, who left many memorials of the form used in allegorical interpretation and these they take as a kind of archetype and imitate the method in which this principle is carried out. And so they do not confine themselves to contemplation but also compose hymns and psalms to God in all sorts of metres and melodies which they write down with the rhythms necessarily made more solemn. (§29)

¹⁶ See Winston, *Contemplative Life*, 321. The reference is to Lev 24:7.

¹⁷ The analogy seems to be found in Philo's works only in *Contempl.* 78 and *Migr.* 93. In the latter passage Philo uses the analogy to argue that the Mosaic laws should be obeyed at the literal level even while their non-literal meaning is affirmed and explored.

¹⁸ Note that Philo's wording (ἅπαντα γὰρ ἡ νομοθεσία δοκεῖ τοῖς ἀνδράσι τούτοις...) implies that he is reporting the rationale which the Therapeutae themselves gave for using allegorical methods.

Evidently the Therapeutae preserve in a kind of library some allegorical writings of their founders, and they engage in ongoing writing themselves, at least of religious songs (words and melodies), as part of their own spiritual discipline (cf. §80). If Philo knows some of these Therapeutae writings, it is interesting that he nowhere seems to quote from them.¹⁹ Likewise, he reports that Therapeutae leaders give speeches to the community (§§31, 75–78), but supplies only general indications of the content.

Philo also refers to a number of pagan writings in *On the Contemplative Life*, and in this treatise he seems more inclined to summarize or quote from pagan writings than Jewish ones.

A first allusion to Homer appears in the remark that Egyptian animal worship is directed at “ugliness unmatched even by a Thersites.”²⁰ In explaining why the Therapeutae gave away their possessions, Philo remarks that “the Greeks extol Anaxagoras and Democritus,” who also gave up their property to pursue philosophy. Perhaps he thereby alludes to written accounts of the lives of those philosophers or to passing descriptions of their virtue in pagan writings.²¹ He agrees that these philosophers set a good precedent for the Therapeutae by abandoning material possessions, but adds that the latter far surpassed them because they thoughtfully gave away their property to relatives or friends. Philo proceeds to cite the aphorism of “the physician Hippocrates” about life being short and “art” long (§16). Perhaps there is a subtle allusion here to the fact that the Therapeutae are also experts in the art of healing. Then he goes on at once to quote a more obscure passage in Homer’s *Iliad*²² about the austere diet of certain Mysians: “Nought else but milk sustains their life, these men of perfect justice” (§17). While they do not confine themselves to milk, the Therapeutae also eat very sparingly and exemplify virtue and the principle of equality. Thus Philo represents the lifestyle of the Therapeutae as a kind of “fulfillment” of certain pagan ideals.

¹⁹ Modern scholarship has sometimes speculated about extant documents that might be attributed to the Therapeutae. See Geoltrain, *Le Traité de la Vie Contemplative*, 26–27.

²⁰ See n. 9 above.

²¹ The story of Anaxagoras’s giving up property is mentioned by Plato (*Hipp. Mai.* 283A and Plutarch (*Pericles* 16). The action of Democritus is mentioned by Cicero (*Tusc. Disp.* 5.114) and Horace (*Ep.* 1.12.12). See Colson, *Philo* 9:120–21, n.

²² One unusual feature of this citation—suggesting its obscurity—is that Philo prefaces it with an exact identification of its location in the *Iliad*.

By contrast, in §§40–41 he describes banquets in which some persons (pagans?) become so violent and drunken that they attack one another physically, biting and gnawing off noses and other body parts. Philo adds that they thereby “make good” Homer’s story of the Cyclops eating some of Odysseus’s comrades. He adds that these drunkards actually exceed the cruelty of Polyphemous—“for he avenged himself on men whom he suspected to be enemies, they on their familiars and friends and sometimes even on their kin.” A little later Philo remarks that these drunkards injure themselves as well as their neighbors “as the comic poet says” (§43), apparently citing an unidentified pagan author.

As a kind of climax to his account of wretched dinner parties, Philo refers at length (in §§57–62) to the famous literary accounts of banquets involving Socrates by Xenophon and Plato. He begins by describing these accounts as “celebrated and highly notable” and the writers as “men whose character and discourses showed them to be philosophers.” Then he immediately adds “even these, if compared with those of our people who embrace the contemplative life, will appear as matters for derision” (§58). Xenophon’s treatise is quickly dismissed as concerned with ordinary people and pleasures (flute girls, dancers, etc.). Plato’s *Symposium* is attacked in some detail on three main grounds: (1) it deals “almost entirely” with physical love, (2) it emphasizes pederasty, (3) it includes mythical stories which are “seductive enough” but contemptible in the eyes of “the disciples of Moses” (63). Generations of scholars have been puzzled by the negativity and unfairness of this characterization (or caricature) of Plato’s dialogue.²³

One text never mentioned by Philo but identified by some modern scholars as significant for interpreting his book about the Therapeutae is an account of ancient Egyptian priests as philosophers written by Chaeremon, an Alexandrian contemporary of Philo. In the fragments reported or summarized by Porphyry and Jerome, Chaeremon offers a highly laudatory account of these priests in ways that are strikingly similar—sometimes verbally identical—to ways in which Philo describes the Therapeutae. Thus Chaeremon says that the Egyptian priests devoted all their time to contemplation and seeking divine

²³ See, e.g., Winston, *Contemplative Life* 320. Perhaps Philo was offended by the dialogue’s apparent tolerance of male homosexuality. *Contempl.* 2 also suggests that the true God transcends Plato’s Idea of the Good.

visions, that they maintained rigorous self-control, were entirely separated from property and money-making, lived with extreme frugality, ate a diet largely consisting of bread, salt, and hyssop, and were sexually inactive while performing their priestly duties or preparing to do so. It seems quite likely that Philo's treatise is partly modeled on such a description of non-Jewish contemplatives—if not on Chaeremon's treatise itself. If so, probably part of his purpose in writing was to suggest that Jewish contemplatives matched or surpassed persons praised by pagans as contemplatives in his own time. Yet he does not mention that he is using such a pagan text as a template—if he is.²⁴

3. *References to Persons and Groups other than the Therapeutae*

How does Philo refer to pagans and Jews in *On the Contemplative Life*? In good measure both groups seem closely identified with texts, as the previous section of this essay suggests.

In his introduction Philo briefly sets forth the concept of God maintained by the Therapeutae and proceeds at once to denounce various types of pagan worship at odds with that concept (§§3–10). In this way he seems from the outset to denounce all forms of pagan religion—though perhaps a philosophical piety affirming a moral monotheism akin to Judaism would be exempted. On the other hand, in describing the Therapeutae as moved by a heavenly love to Bacchic or Corybantic rapture (§§12, 85), Philo alludes to pagan mysteries in ways reminiscent of Plato and suggests that these Jews attain a religious fulfillment akin to what pagans have sought in those mysteries.²⁵ His long passage about obnoxious banquets (“those of other people”—§40) probably is meant to describe mainly pagan gatherings (cf. §48).

²⁴ See esp. P. W. van der Horst, *Chaeremon: Egyptian Priest and Stoic Philosopher* (Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'Empire Romain 101; Leiden: Brill, 1984) esp. ix–xi, 56–61. Van der Horst argues that even verbal parallels between *On the Contemplative Life* and Chaeremon's account probably indicate not direct literary dependence but rather that “both authors largely draw on a traditional vocabulary designed to describe the ideal way of life of a community of philosophizing saints” (p. 56). Cf. J. Riaud, “Les Thérapeutes d'Alexandrie dans la tradition et dans la recherche critique jusqu'aux découvertes de Qumran,” *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* I.20.2 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1987) 1274–75.

²⁵ Platonic texts that illuminate Philo's use of such language include *Ion* 534 A, *Laws* 790 D and *Symp.* 215 E.

As we have seen, Philo refers positively to Anaxagoras and Democritus for abandoning their property to pursue philosophy, citing their behavior to justify the policy of the Therapeutae. But Philo quickly adds that the latter demonstrate a responsible disposal of material things in great contrast to the carelessness of those pagan philosophers. He speaks positively of Xenophon and Plato as philosophers but proceeds at once to condemn the symposia involving Socrates they write about as trivial or morally degrading (57–63). The criticism of Plato is very odd, given the high praise Philo accords to that philosopher and his teachings elsewhere.²⁶

Philo assumes that his readers will know about these individual pagans and accord them some level of respect. At the same time we might say that, while he says both positive and negative things about pagans, greater weight is given to the negative side.

In a somewhat puzzling passage (§§21–22) Philo makes the transition from talking about Therapeutae in general to describing the particular community above Lake Mareotis:

This kind exists in many places in the inhabited world, for perfect goodness must needs be shared both by Greeks and the world outside Greece, but it abounds in Egypt in each of the nomes as they are called and especially round Alexandria. But the best of these votaries journey from every side to settle in a certain very suitable place which they regard as their fatherland. This place is situated above the Mareotic Lake on a somewhat low-lying hill. . . .

What exactly does Philo mean by saying that the Therapeutae exist in many places in Greece and Barbarian lands? He does not elaborate. Is he thinking of pagans who demonstrate a kind of contemplative piety analogous to that of the Jewish Therapeutae community above Lake Mareotis?²⁷ Is he implying that Jewish Therapeutae live in almost every Greek and Barbarian country (though we have no evidence for this)? Or could he be suggesting that the Jewish Diaspora

²⁶ David Winston calls Philo “an unabashed Platonist” and stresses, among other points of influence, the Platonic background of Philo’s concept of the ascent of the soul. See his “Philo and the Contemplative Life,” in A. Green (ed.), *Jewish Spirituality from the Bible through the Middle Ages*, World Spirituality 13 (New York: Crossroad, 1987) 211, 215. Even within *On the Contemplative Life* there are numerous suggestions of Platonic influence, not least in Philo’s critique of pederasty (cf. Plato, *Laws* 838 E).

²⁷ Cf. J. E. Taylor and P. R. Davies, “The So-Called Therapeutae” 4–10.

exists in every land, with the implication that all Jews manifest something of the fundamental religious integrity and discipline attested by the Lake Mareotis community?

We may turn to consider the roles that Judaism and Jews outside the Therapeutae community play in *On the Contemplative Life*. As already noted, Philo only gradually makes the Jewish identity of the Lake Mareotis community clear. He speaks simply of their philosophical monotheism and their “sacred laws” in §2. He describes their study of laws, prophetic writings, psalms, and other piety-fostering writings (§25) and their “holy scriptures” and “ancestral philosophy” (§28)—but still without plainly identifying the sacred writings as Jewish. In §58, as he winds up his account of pagan banqueting, he speaks of “those of our people who embrace the contemplative life.” The meaning of “our people” is not explained here, but in the light of the whole treatise the sense can only be “Jews.” Finally in §§63–64 the Jewish connection is made unmistakable as Philo speaks of “the disciples of Moses” and the Therapeutae “who have dedicated their own life and themselves to knowledge and the contemplation of the verities of nature, following the truly sacred instructions of the prophet Moses.” Again, in §§85–87 the choral dance of the Therapeutae is described as modeled on the celebration of the Red Sea deliverance which was led by Moses and Miriam. Thus the Jewishness of the community is made clear by references to their devotion to the Jewish Bible. The Therapeutae reveal who they are in their reading, study, writing, and scripture-centered worship. *On the Contemplative Life* never uses the terms “Jew,” “Hebrew,” or “Israel.”²⁸

What does Philo intend to suggest about the relation of the Therapeutae to Jews outside their community at Lake Mareotis? *On the Contemplative Life* says virtually nothing directly about such Jews apart from mention of relatives or friends to whom the Therapeutae have passed on their property. The Therapeutae have given their property to

their sons or daughters or to other kinsfolk, thus voluntarily advancing the time of their inheritance, while those who have no kinsfolk give them to comrades and friends. For it was right that those who

²⁸ On the relation of the Therapeutae to Philo’s concept of Israel, see esp. E. Birnbaum, *The Place of Judaism in Philo’s Thought* (Brown Judaic Studies 290, Studia Philonica Monographs 2; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996) 119.

have received ready to their hand the wealth that has eyes to see should surrender the blind wealth to those who are still blind in mind. (§13)

A bit later Philo praises the Therapeutae whose passing on of their worldly wealth had the effect of

... benefiting both others and themselves, others through supplying them with abundant resources, themselves through furthering the study of philosophy. For taking care of wealth and possessions consumes time. . . . (§16)

The Therapeutae have saved themselves the time and trouble of caring for material possessions, even though such things are only “blind wealth” for the spiritually blind—their relatives and friends (most or all of whom are surely Jewish!).

Philo does not suggest that the Therapeutae are heretical sectarians or that they stand at odds with other Jews in Egypt or elsewhere. They have a special calling or vocation (προαίρεσις—§§2, 29, 67; cf. *Hypoth.* 11.2), but this does not seem to cut them off from the wider Jewish community.²⁹ He speaks of them at one point simply as “those of our people who embrace the contemplative life” (58). As he concludes his critique of the Plato’s *Symposium*, Philo mentions that its mythical stories are disdained by “the disciples of Moses, trained from their earliest years to love the truth”—an expression that must refer to all Jews (63). A few lines later he introduces his description of the sacred meals of the Therapeutae as “the festal meetings of those who have dedicated their own life and themselves to knowledge and the contemplation of the verities of nature, following the truly sacred instructions of the prophet Moses.” The remarkable ritual dancing that climaxes the 50th-day festive meal is simply a remembrance of God’s fundamental salvation deed on behalf of all Israel. His phraseology suggests that Philo thinks of the Therapeutae (and wants his readers to think of them) as representatives of all Jews—not as persons who seek to cut themselves off from other Jews or condemn those others as blind or unspiritual. The Therapeutae have, as it were, risen to the pinnacle of human spiritual development—

²⁹ Cf. David T. Runia, “Philo of Alexandria and the Greek *Hairesis*-Model,” *VC* 53 (1999) 117–47. He argues convincingly that Philo’s use of αἵρεσις in *Contempl.* 29 does not imply that the Therapeutae are like a Greek “school of thought” or sect (see esp. 139–40).

but they have not thereby separated themselves from their Jewish brothers and sisters.³⁰ They are, as it were, living proofs of the value of the Jewish religion, just as Christian monastics in later centuries were sometimes regarded as attesting the truth of Christianity. Ordinary believers could find inspiration in monastics who embraced poverty, celibacy, and full-time concentration on God.

A final question about personal relationship may be worth considering. How does Philo represent his own connection with the Therapeutae? Philo does not very often refer directly to himself or his own opinions in his various treatises, though in the exegetical ones he does occasionally refer to himself as an inspired exegete.³¹ In *On the Contemplative Life* he does not directly mention his own scriptural investigations, but he does refer to himself with a personal pronoun or first person singular verb form in eleven passages of this relatively short treatise. Some of these self-references are simply signals to the reader about what Philo is about to discuss—or skip over without discussing (§§1, 40, 63, 64, 75). He assures his readers that he will not exaggerate the virtues of those he writes about, though that is common among “poets and historians” and he adds that he knows that even the greatest orator might be intimidated by the task he is undertaking (§1). He introduces his first reference to Homer by modestly saying that he *thinks* he grasps the poet’s meaning (§17)—but this may be only a conventional way of making his interpretation more acceptable. He compares the meager diet of the Therapeutae to that of grasshoppers, “who are said to live on air because, *I suppose*, their singing makes their lack of food a light matter” (§35).³² He says he admires pagan philosophers who showed themselves superior to material wealth, but then adds that he might call them insane for disposing of their possessions thoughtlessly (§14). He remarks that

³⁰ Cf. the judgment of V. Nikiprowetzky: “Les Thérapeutes n’y apparaissent pas comme des schismatiques, mais comme des disciples de Moïse authentiques et accomplis” (“Le ‘De Vita Contemplativa’ revisité,” *Sagesse et Religion. Colloque de la Université des Sciences Humaines de Strasbourg, 20–22 octobre 1976* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1979) 124.

³¹ Cf. D. M. Hay, (1991). “Philo’s View of Himself as an Exegete: Inspired, but not Authoritative,” in D. T. Runia *et al.*, *Heirs of the Septuagint: Philo, Hellenistic Judaism, and Early Christianity: Festschrift for Earle Hilgert*. *SPhilo* 3 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991) 40–52.

³² Perhaps Philo here alludes to Plato, *Phaedrus* 259 C (see Colson, *Philo*, 9.132–33, n.).

he knows some drunkards who never leave an alcohol-drenched dinner without planning another (§46)—as though he has attended such dinners himself (cf. *Leg.* 3.155–56).³³ Likewise, when describing the simplicity of Therapeutae meals, he says “I know that some will laugh at this” (§73)—suggesting that he has acquaintances whose values are radically different.

Throughout the treatise Philo consistently praises the Therapeutae, and at the end (§90) he sets them on the highest imaginable spiritual level. Yet he never tells the reader how he has come by his information about them. He never hints that he himself was ever a member of the community, and his other writings indicate that he himself was mainly a city-dweller with his own traditional household and much involved in public affairs.³⁴ On at least one issue he seems unsure of something vital: the meaning of their group’s name (§2). In general, however, Philo presents himself as a reliable and knowledgeable informant. When he explains why they do certain things and refrain from others, the rationales Philo presents are phrased in such a way that it is difficult to distinguish what he himself thinks from the notions of the Therapeutae themselves (see, e.g., §§13, 16, 19–20, 24, 28, 37, 66, 68, 70). Readers might well wonder about Philo’s relationship with the Therapeutae and why he inserts himself into his treatise with fairly frequent self-references which, however, never clarify that relationship.

4. Possible Inferences about Literary Purposes and Implied Readers

In *On the Contemplative Life* Philo paints an attractive picture of the Therapeutae, and the references to other texts and persons outside their community add richness and depth to the picture. All these “others” serve as foils to help readers better assess this distinctive community and its importance. The Therapeutae are portrayed as having chosen to isolate themselves from the rest of the world, but

³³ Cf. P. Borgen, *Philo of Alexandria, An Exegete for His Time* (Leiden: Brill, 1997) 166–71.

³⁴ See my essay, “The Veiled Thoughts of the Therapeutae,” in R. M. Berchman (ed.), *Mediators of the Divine* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998) esp. 168–73. Although passages in his other writings like *Leg.* 2.85 and *Spec.* 3.1–6 may allude to personal contacts with the Therapeutae (see Geoltrain, *Le Traité de la Vie Contemplative*, 26), this can only be a matter of conjecture.

Philo makes his readers think about the grounds for that decision and about Jews and pagans outside the community. At the end, an impressionable reader might well be convinced that the members of this group are living at the summit of human experience.

The treatise enhances the excellence of the Therapeutae by providing a variety of images of human folly and injustice. Without making every contrast explicit, Philo urges readers to make their own judgments about matters like the destructive drunkenness of Greco-Roman banquets as opposed to the sober intoxication of the Therapeutae, the lust-edged slavery of the pagan world as opposed to the dignified and free service of young men at the tables of the Therapeutae. On the other hand, while frequently indicating what is wrong with pagans and paganism, he does not in §§40–62 explicitly identify the wrong kinds of banquets as entirely pagan or claim that all pagans are guilty of the vices he describes there. While the balance of things said about paganism in *On the Contemplative Life* tips in a negative direction, Philo indicates that some pagans have spoken or acted well and that even Egyptian animal worshippers are “kinsfolk of the Godhead” (§9). While the focus of the treatise is on a particular Jewish community, §21 leaves the door ajar for some gentiles to be considered among the Therapeutae who live in other parts of the world.

Probably Philo wrote *On the Contemplative Life* with multiple purposes and perhaps more than one audience in view. The treatise assumes readers familiar with and generally respectful of pagan writers but ones who are also knowledgeable about the Jewish religion. The intended readers might be cultured hellenistic Jews of Philo’s social and educational class, but they might perhaps equally well be cultured gentiles attracted to Judaism. Perhaps Philo delays making the Jewish identity of the Therapeutae plain until gentile readers are already disposed to admire them.

It is surely right to see the treatise as an encomium, a description written in praise of contemplation and of a particular community of Jewish contemplatives. It also seems right to see the work as apologetic and protreptic, though perhaps not in the sense of urging readers to try to live as Therapeutae or join that rather esoteric community. It seems quite possible that it was written in part, as Manuel Alexandre, Jr. argues, to appeal to Jews in danger of assimilating wholly to pagan society to regain their Jewishness. The sharpness of attacks on paganism and even Plato suggest that Philo feels that at least some

in his audience are so enamored of pagan culture and philosophy that they might not see the necessity of the Jewish religion. If pagans have some things and persons to boast about, Jews can take pride in the existence of the community above the Mareotic Lake.

Perhaps the treatise may be considered as protreptic in the broader sense of designed to instill or confirm values that Philo regards as essential to Judaism in general: devotion to a God who is both transcendent being and savior, commitment to immaterial realities as the highest goods, and to allegorical study of the Jewish scriptures as a superior avenue for approaching those goods. Religious simplicity is encouraged, without implying that everyone should be without property or celibate. Devotion to contemplation and fellowship with like-minded worshippers is promoted, without implying that everyone should abandon city life. Philo refers to himself and his opinions in ways that indicate he feels inwardly linked with the Therapeutae, though he does not claim an external connection. Perhaps he intends a special message for the reader: you, too, may learn from this community without physically (literally) joining it.

PHILO OF ALEXANDRIA, *LEGATIO AD GAIUM* 1–7

David T. Runia

1. *A Remarkable Passage*

One of the more remarkable passages in the Philonic corpus is the opening section of the treatise *Legatio ad Gaium*, in which Philo gives his account of the vicissitudes experienced by the Jews during the reign of the Emperor Gaius Caligula.¹ The passage reads as follows (§§1–7):²

§1. How long shall we old men still be children, our bodies grey with age through the length of time, but as far as our souls are concerned still infants through our insensibility, regarding what is most unstable, fortune, as most unchanging and what is most securely fixed, nature, as most unreliable? For we exchange them just like in a game of draughts and alter the state of our affairs, thinking that what is subject to fortune is more stable than what is natural and what belongs to nature is more unreliable than what is subject to fortune.

§2. The reason for this is that we judge the present without having forethought for the future, relying on erroneous sense-perception instead of unerring thought. For what is apparent and close to hand is perceived with the eyes, but it is understanding that reaches what is unseen and still in the future. In our case, however, its sight, however, though sharper than what is achieved through the eyes of the body, has become dim, for some confused by strong drink and excess food, for others by the greatest of evils, ignorance.

¹ It is generally agreed that the title in general use does not cover the contents of the treatise particularly well. For discussions and defense of the Eusebian title Περὶ ἀρετῶν, also found in the manuscripts, see J. Morris, “The Jewish Philosopher Philo,” in E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 BC–AD 135)*, rev. G. Vermes and F. Millar and M. Goodman (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1987) III.2, 859–63; P. Borgen, *Philo of Alexandria: An Exegete for His Time*, NovTSup, 86 (Leiden: Brill, 1997) 180.

² I give a literal translation which tries to adhere closely to Philo’s language and syntax. It is based on the text in L. Cohn, P. Wendland and S. Reiter, *Philonis Alexandrini opera quae supersunt*, 6 vols. (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1896–1915) 6.155.4–156.24 (the bracketing of τοῦ in §3 seems unnecessary).

§3. And yet the present situation and the many important questions that have been resolved in it are sufficient to persuade even those who did not believe that the divinity exercised forethought for human beings, and especially for the suppliant kind, which has obtained as its inheritance the Father and King of the universe and the cause of all things.

§4. This kind is called Israel in the Chaldean language, but in Greek its name is interpreted 'he who sees God', which in my view is the most precious of all public or private possessions.

§5. For if the sight of senior people or teachers or rulers or parents moves those who see them to modesty and good behaviour and eagerness to live a life of self-control, how much greater a support for excellence and goodness will be found in souls that have been educated to transcend the realm of becoming and fix their sight on what is ungenerated and divine, the primal Good and Beautiful and Felicitous and Blessed, indeed if the truth be told, what is better than the Good, more beautiful than the Beautiful, more blessed than Blessedness, more felicitous than Felicity itself and whatever is more perfect than what has been mentioned.

§6. For the *logos* does not succeed in ascending to God who cannot be touched or handled in any way, but it sinks and ebbs away, unable to use the right names as a basis for elucidation, I do not mean of the One who IS,—for not even the entire heaven, if it became an articulate voice, could find the right supply of accurate and suitable words—but of his attendant powers, the creative and the royal and the providential and of the others those that are beneficial and punitive.

§7. We assume here that the punitive powers should also be placed among the beneficial, not only on the grounds that they are component parts of laws and ordinances—for a law is complete if it has two components, reward for what is good and punishment for what is wicked—but also because punishment in many cases admonishes and disciplines those who go astray, or if this does not happen, at least affects those who are nearby. For penalties afflicted on others have a beneficial effect on the crowd, who are afraid to suffer a similar fate.

At the end of the passage Philo immediately turns to the main theme of the treatise. Anyone who saw Gaius after the death of Tiberius would have been amazed at the prosperous situation that he inherited when he ascended the imperial throne (§§8–13). But this propitious state of affairs only lasted seven months. Then Gaius got sick and the rot set in (§14).

For at least two reasons this passage is quite exceptional in Philo's *œuvre*. As Ellen Birnbaum has pointed out in her monograph on the place of Judaism in Philo's thought, this is the only passage in a non-exegetical work in which Israel and the etymology of 'seeing God' occurs (§4) and—even more striking perhaps—it is the only

passage anywhere in Philo where a direct link is made between Israel and the Jews.³ A further remarkable aspect has been pointed out by Peter Frick in his monograph on divine providence in Philo. This is the only passage in his entire writings in which a divine providential power is specifically mentioned (§6).⁴ The reason for this is not difficult to give. In both treatises *Flacc.* and *Legat.* Philo strongly emphasizes the intervention of providence in the events that happened to the Jews in 37 to 42 CE.⁵ The reason for the first remarkable feature is less easy to explain, as we shall see.

Peder Borgen, in a long career as a contributor to Philonic studies that spans nearly forty years, has consistently reminded us that we must take Philo's Jewish background into account when we read and interpret him. On a number of occasions he has drawn attention to the importance of the passage cited above. Recently in his major monograph on Philo as exegete he has convincingly argued that there are significant thematic and linguistic parallels pointing to the conclusion that this passage was written in conjunction with the final treatises of the Exposition of the Law.⁶ I hope, therefore, that he will be pleased to accept this contribution on the interpretation of the passage as a small token of the esteem in which I hold him as a scholar and a friend.

2. *Difficulties in Interpretation*

In various discussions of the passage over the past hundred years two main problems have been discerned. Firstly, scholars have wondered whether the passage was complete. The transition at §8, which begins with the words: For who, on seeing Gaius succeed to the rulership of the entire earth' (τίς γὰρ ἰδὼν Γαίον . . .), was considered too abrupt. In the view of Massebieau there must have been at least a transitional sentence which connected the general comment at the

³ E. Birnbaum, *The Place of Judaism in Philo's Thought: Israel, Jews, and Proselytes*, BJS 290 = Studia Philonica Monographs 2 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996) 105, 189.

⁴ P. Frick, *Divine Providence in Philo of Alexandria*, TSAJ 77 (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1999) 80.

⁵ See further below at n. 35.

⁶ See Borgen, *Philo of Alexandria* 182–183. I would extend this and see connections with the entire Exposition, as well as with *Contempl.* and perhaps *Mos.* as well. But this question falls outside the scope of the present paper.

end of §7 with the specific case of Gaius' rise and fall.⁷ Others have suspected a longer lacuna. This view was taken over by Cohn and found its way into Reiter's edition.⁸ Secondly, there has been considerable discussion on the question why Philo should launch into a theological digression—as it is assumed to be—at this particular point. The reason is not made plain, and it seems somewhat out of place in a purely historical and apologetic treatise. In fact, as we shall see, these two problems might not be unrelated. It is possible, for example, that the relevance of the theological passage might have been made clear in the lacuna. There is, in my view, a further problem that the passage raises which has not received the attention that it deserves. The passage contains various allusions to seeing, reasoning and speaking. How do these fit together? What is the relation between the dimming of the sight of the reasoning (λογισμός) in §2 and the sight that Israel has of God (§§4–5)? Why does Philo follow the statement on divine transcendence (§5) with a passage on the limitations of the human logos (§6) and what is its relevance to the passage as a whole?

It will be worthwhile to look a little more closely at some of the scholarly readings of the passage in order to make the above-mentioned problems more concrete. In a spirited introduction to his translation, Colson argued there was no need to posit a lacuna at the end of the introductory passage.⁹ This would involve a misapprehension of Philo's regular method. The essence of what Philo wants to say is found in the first three or four sections, namely that people judge blindly on the basis of present events, yet what has happened should persuade them of the workings of providence, especially in relation to Israel. Thereafter he goes off into a "thoroughly Philonic ramble"

⁷ L. Massebieau, "Le classement des œuvres de Philon," *Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes Études: Sciences Religieuses* (Paris, 1889) 68.

⁸ L. Cohn, 'Einteilung und Chronologie der Schriften Philos', *Philologus* Supplbd. 7 (1899) 422; S. Reiter in *Philonis Alexandrini* 6.156. See further the note at E. M. Smallwood, *Philonis Alexandrini Legatio ad Gaium* (2nd ed.; Leiden: Brill, 1970²) 157–158. I leave aside the speculations of Massebieau and Cohn, inspired by the evidence of Eusebius, that our present *Legat.* might be a compressed version of an original work in 5 books.

⁹ See in F. H. Colson; G. H. Whitaker, and R. Marcus, *Philo of Alexandria in Ten Volumes (and Two Supplementary Volumes)*, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1929–62) 10.xx–xxi. Cf. also Y. Amir, *Die hellenistische Gestalt des Judentums bei Philon von Alexandrien*, Forschungen zum jüdisch-christlichen Dialog 5 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Verlag Gerd Mohn, 1983) 21.

in four stages: (a) Israel means he who sees God; (b) to see God is the highest gift; (c) for reason in itself cannot apprehend God nor even his powers; (d) the powers mean his punitive as well as his beneficial powers. Colson says that he is surprised that Philo has allowed himself this ramble, especially because its themes belong to the Commentary and are not repeated in the rest of the treatise. But it is quite consonant with Philo's method to return back to the main point after a rambling parenthesis. The γάρ at the beginning of §8 can be explained in that the joy that greeted Gaius' accession illustrates the blindness of human reason postulated in §§1–2. Moreover it suggests that the entire account will illustrate the assertion that providence watches over Israel in §3. Colson's arguments against a lacuna are in my view quite strong. But is it necessary to agree with him that the second half of the passage is a ramble which works by association rather than a coherent line of thought? I suggest that, before agreeing with this conclusion, we invoke the principle of charity and assume that Philo is aware of what he is doing. The challenge is thus to reconstruct the train of his argument.

A vigorous proponent of the view that the passage is incomplete in its present state is Goodenough in his study on Philo's politics.¹⁰ It is strange, he argues, that Philo, in a discussion of God's providential care for humankind and particularly for the "suppliant race," should "plunge the reader into the Mystery." The mystic vision granted to the Jews is hidden from other humans, since they have no higher gift than reason, and reason cannot even rise to God's Powers. We cannot be certain, Goodenough continues, how far Philo was going to penetrate into the Mystery, because the continuity of his presentation suddenly breaks off. It may be suspected, however, that he would have argued that the Jews on account of their mystic powers of vision performed an intercessory role between God and the rest of humankind, saving it from the terrible effects of divine wrath.

Goodenough's reading presumes, of course, on his general interpretation of Philo's thought as an initiation into the great Mystery (note the capital in the above citation) of Hellenistic Judaism, a view that has been universally rejected by subsequent scholars.¹¹ Nevertheless

¹⁰ E. R. Goodenough, *The Politics of Philo Judaeus, Practice and Theory* (New Haven, 1938; Hildesheim: Olms, 1967) 12–13. He agrees with Massebieau and Cohn that *Legat.* in its present state is an abridgement; see above n. 8.

¹¹ For critiques see V. Nikiprowetzky, *Le commentaire de l'Écriture chez Philon d'Alexandrie*:

his mystical interpretation of the opening passage of *Legat.* has been rather influential. It is taken over, for example, by Smallwood in her commentary on the passage. Noting that in §6 the *Sacra Parallela* read the plural ἐπιβάθραις (i.e. steps on a ladder) instead of the manuscripts' ἐπιβάθρα, she implicitly takes this variant over and argues:¹²

The use of this word suggests an oblique reference to Philo's belief in a kind of ladder of mystical experience; as a man progresses up its rungs, he penetrates deeper into the mystery of reality, and his vision and conception of God and His activity change. [There follows a reference to Goodenough.] The argument in 4–7 is that what the unaided human intellect (λόγος) fails to attain, the Jew with his special insight (4) can attain through a mystical experience.

The final sentence is quoted with approval by Borgen in his recent monograph.¹³ He argues that both *Spec.* 2.164–166 and the passage in *Legat.* show that there is no basic gap between Philo's historical treatise on the events in Alexandria and his other (i.e. exegetical) writings. Although the formulation in §§5–6 is general, referring to 'souls', the context shows that it must have a special application, i.e. specifically to the Jewish race in its entirety. Philo connects his anthropology with his understanding of the Jewish people. The association with the etymology of Israel as "seeing God" means this understanding must have a mystical dimension.

In the passage just referred to, Borgen takes issue with the interpretation of *Legat.* 1–7 given by Birnbaum.¹⁴ Although, as we have noted earlier, she recognizes that this passage is the only place where Philo links Israel, the one who sees God, with the Jews, and she also affirms that the Jews have an intercessory role, she denies that a causal connection is involved:¹⁵

Philo does not connect the ability of 'Israel' to see God—which is implied by the meaning of its name, ὁρᾶν θεόν—with any of the above-mentioned claims about the relationship between God and the Jews. In other words, it is not *because* they see God that the Jews are the suppliant γένοϋς that they have been allotted or allot themselves to God,

son caractère et sa portée; observations philologiques, ALGHJ 11 (Leiden: Brill, 1977) 14–21; Borgen, *Philo of Alexandria* 1–5.

¹² Smallwood, *Philonis Alexandrini* 155. On this word see further below at n. 52.

¹³ Borgen, *Philo of Alexandria* 240–242; also by A. Pelletier, *Philon Legatio ad Caium*, Les Œuvres de Philon d'Alexandrie 32 (Paris, 1972) 64 n. 4.

¹⁴ Borgen, *Philo of Alexandria* 242, responding to earlier versions of her thesis.

¹⁵ Birnbaum, *The Place of Judaism* 189 (her emphases).

or that they benefit from His providence. Nor does Philo allege that the Jews can see God *because* of these other characteristics of their relationship to Him.

Why then does Philo begin his treatise so surprisingly with a summary of philosophical motifs which are usually kept quite separate from discussions about the Jewish nation? The main aim of the prologue, Birnbaum argues, is to show that God watches out specially for the Jews. It is also suggested, however, that Philo might be attempting to vindicate his people's way of life from another perspective. The Jews, because they are linked to Israel, embody the highest philosophical goal, seeing God. When Philo contends that reason cannot attain this goal, he implies that philosophy on its own is not enough. The Jews exemplify something greater than philosophy, i.e. worship of God through observance of his Laws. These include provision for reward and punishment, as brought about through God's powers.¹⁶ Birnbaum's interpretation thus substitutes observance of the Law for the mystical emphasis of the views of Goodenough, Smallwood and Borgen.¹⁷ She admits, however, that this view of the Jewish path as going beyond what philosophy offers is difficult to rhyme with the text at *Virt.* 65, which states that "what the disciples of the most reputable philosophy gain from its teaching, the Jews obtain from their laws and customs, knowledge of the highest and most ancient cause of all things, when they reject the delusion of gods who have come into being."¹⁸

What all these interpretations have in common is that they examine the passage, and especially the theological section §§4–7, in relative isolation from the remainder of the treatise. This is less true of another brief but suggestive reading offered by Meeks.¹⁹ He agrees that the excursus is "odd," and wonders why Philo has included in his "most political tract" an allusion to the allegory of Israel as "the

¹⁶ Birnbaum, *The Place of Judaism* 191.

¹⁷ Note however, that Borgen too interprets *παιδεύονται* in §5 as 'being trained in the Laws of Moses'; cf. *Philo of Alexandria* 241.

¹⁸ Birnbaum, *The Place of Judaism* 118, cf. 191 n. 76.

¹⁹ W. A. Meeks, 'The Divine Agent and his Counterfeit in Philo and the Fourth Gospel', in E. Schüssler Fiorenza (ed.), *Aspects of Religious Propaganda in Judaism and Early Christianity* (Notre Dame and London: University of Notre Dame, 1976) 43–67, esp. 50–54. Although H. Leisegang, 'Philons Schrift über die Gesandtschaft der alexandrinischen Juden an den Kaiser Gaius Caligula,' *JBL* 57 (1938) 377–405, recognizes the importance of the deification theme in the treatise, he does not relate it to the contents of the opening passage.

nation who sees God.” But Meeks’ chief theme is the role of the divine agent, whether it be Moses or the Logos.²⁰ This encourages him to relate the opening passage to the important theme in the treatise of Gaius’ attempt at self-deification. Israel has a special knowledge of God. This is exactly why Gaius singled out the Jews for persecution (§§115–118).

Taking our cue from Meeks, our aim in the remainder of this article will be to offer an extended contextual reading of *Legat.* 1–7. This means that the theological passage §§4–7 needs to be read within the context of the entire opening section, and it in turn needs to be read within the context of the treatise as a whole (and its companion piece *Flacc.*).²¹ In so doing we shall have to confront the problems raised at the beginning of this section, in the hope that the appeal we made to the principle of charity above will prove justified.

3. *A Contextual Reading*

The beginning of the treatise is well-known in Philonic studies because (together with §182) it contains a unique, if rather rhetorical, reference to Philo’s advanced age and thus gives us a clue to the approximate dates of his birth and death. Moreover it contains an erudite allusion to Plato *Tim.* 22b, in which the Egyptian priest describes the Greeks as children when compared to the more ancient Egyptians.²² For an understanding of our passage as a whole, however, two other themes are more important.

Firstly a contrast is established between Fortune (τύχη) and Nature (φύσις), the former being considered to be stable and the latter unreliable, whereas in fact the reverse is the case (§1). The antithesis is

²⁰ On this theme cf. also two articles of P. Borgen, “Illegitimate Invasion and Proper Ascent: A Study of Passages in Philo’s Writings and the Revelation to John,” *Early Christianity and Hellenistic Judaism*, ed. P. Borgen (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1996) 293–307; ‘Moses, Jesus, and the Roman Emperor: Observations in Philo’s Writings and the Revelation of John’, *NovT* 38 (1996) 145–159.

²¹ A difficulty here is the fact that *Legat.* is obviously a torso. It is possible that the full import of Philo’s opening section could only be understood if we also had access to the sequel to *Legat.* announced in §373. This problem is unavoidable and insoluble.

²² Cf. the comments of Pelletier *Philon Legatio ad Caium*, 60, D. T. Runia, *Philo of Alexandria and the Timaeus of Plato*, *Philosophia Antiqua* 44 (2nd ed.; Leiden: Brill, 1986) 74, 77.

rare in Philo.²³ It will be better understood if the two components are first taken separately. *Tychê* refers here above all to the topsyturvy nature of human life. Fortunes come and go, prosperity is achieved and then lost again. The image of the game of draughts—Heraclitan in origin²⁴—recurs in two important parallel passages. In *Mos.* 1.31–32 the young Moses at Pharaoh's court is contrasted with those who are puffed up with their good fortune:²⁵

For nothing is more unstable than fortune, which moves human affairs up and down like on a draught-board, often on a single day laying low the highly placed and raising on high the lowly placed. And even though these people see and clearly recognize that this is always happening, nevertheless they are contemptuous of their relatives and friends and transgress the laws under which they have been born and raised . . . But Moses, having reached the very pinnacle of human prosperity [εὐτυχία] . . . showed zeal for the ancestral teachings of his family . . .

Similarly in the famous Heraclitan passage on dream-like nature of human life in *Ios.* 125–147,²⁶ Philo notes how nations rise and fall and concludes that this occurs ‘through the turnings of human affairs and the changes like moves up and down on a draughts-board’, which cause some to fantasize unlimited prosperity for themselves, whereas disaster will ensue, while others expect evil and meet up with good (§136). Prosperity and success (εὐτυχία), when fortune smiles on life, are inherently instable and can swiftly change to misfortune (ἀτυχία).²⁷

The opposite to *Tuchê* is *Physis*, representing what is stable and fixed, not subject to the vicissitudes of chance. The realm of *Physis* can extend from the regularities of nature to the immutable realities of the intelligible realm. The main contrast is between human affairs and what is non-human or super-human. For the theologically minded Philo, the main source of order and stability in the world is God

²³ The only other example I have found is at *Spec.* 3.137, where in the case of a servant Philo makes a contrast between his lot and his nature, “but for the divine law the standard of justice is not what is in harmony with fortune but with nature.”

²⁴ Heraclitus fr. B52 Diels-Kranz; cf. Plato *Laws* 903b.

²⁵ Philo may well be thinking of his nephew Alexander in this passage.

²⁶ For Heraclitan texts in Philo see now S. Mouraviev, *Heraclitea II.A.1. Héraclite d'Éphèse, La tradition antique et médiévale. Témoignages et citations: Textes et traduction d'Épicharme à Philon d'Alexandrie* (Sankt Augustin: Academia Verlag, 1999) 237–253 (he includes citations and paraphrases, not allusions, so there is no reference to our text).

²⁷ Similar themes are found in *Mos.* 2.41, *Deus* 172–176, *Somn.* 1.153, *Decal.* 43, *QG* fr. 5 Petit, etc.

and his divine purpose. Nature is thus primarily identifiable with God, a Stoicizing form of expression that is frequently found throughout Philo's works.²⁸

The second important theme is epistemological. We child-like humans, Philo affirms (§1), are insensitive towards the true state of affairs. We judge the present by what we see instead of using our powers of thought (διάνοια). This means we have no eye for what is unseen and awaiting us in the future. Only our understanding (λογισμός) gives us access to this realm. But the eye of our understanding, which should be able to see much more penetratingly than our bodily vision, is dimmed, either through bad living or through ignorance (§2). The mildly platonizing contrast is of course familiar to all readers of Philo.²⁹ Implicit is also the gift of prophecy which the mind only achieves under divine inspiration.³⁰

Both themes are commonplaces or *topoi* and are surely meant to be recognized as such.³¹ This is especially the case in the formulation of the second theme. Why should the understanding be befuddled by food and drink? Are there not more plausible reasons for a lack of judgment, such as fear and despair? Plainly Philo is not writing this treatise for an intellectually sophisticated audience. But it goes without saying that he had a purpose in beginning his account with these themes. We need to investigate how these *topoi* are applied to the events recounted in the treatise.

The topsy-turvy nature of human affairs is illustrated at various levels. At the beginning of Gaius' reign the prosperity (εὐτυχία) was so great that it looked like a more permanent state of well-being (εὐδαιμονία) would be achieved (§11). But soon Gaius became sick, his promise changed (μεταβαλόν) to savagery (§22), and the hopes of his subjects altered to total disillusionment. The Ptolemies were

²⁸ See the discussion in Nikiprowetzky, *Le commentaire* 150–151.

²⁹ See for example the excellent example at *Aet.* 1–2 and the other texts given at Runia, *Philo of Alexandria and the Timaeus*, 126.

³⁰ Note in this context the unusual passage at *Legat.* 109, where the ability to see the future is attributed to Apollo, who 'has foreknowledge of the future as if it were already present and sees it with the understanding rather than with the eyes of the body, thereby protecting himself and taking care that no harm befalls himself.' The terminology here is very similar to that used in §2, even if Philo does not believe for a moment in the existence of this Greek god.

³¹ As noted by A. J. Festugière, *La révélation d'Hermès trismégiste*, vol. 2 *Le dieu cosmique* (Paris: Société d'Édition les Belles Lettres, 1949) 523, 555–567.

sensible rulers, but their good fortune was surpassed by the Julio-Claudian emperors Augustus and Tiberius, until the megalomaniac Gaius entered the scene (§§138–154, cf. §309). The change had a disastrous effect on the fortunes of the Jewish community. Formerly we were prosperous (εὐτυχεῖς), Philo writes in §114, but now all is changed. The members of the embassy lament the misfortunes (ἀτυχίαι) of their nation, but still fix their hope on God (§§196–197). The loyal Jew King Agrippa thinks along similar lines. He is prepared to renounce his fortune if the ancestral customs of the Jews could be left unchanged. Other highly-placed persons such as Flaccus also suffered under Gaius' whims, exchanging good fortune for misfortune (§§339–342, cf. *Flacc.* 183–185).

Less is made in the treatise of the stability of nature. A rather whimsical contrast is made between nature and Gaius (§190): “we (ambassadors) sailed through the middle of the stormy winter, unaware how great a storm was awaiting us, far more dangerous on land than on sea. For of the latter nature is the cause, dividing the year into seasons, and nature is a preserver, whereas of the latter a human being is the cause, a reckless youth. . . .” The real contrast is between the nature of God, supremely powerful, providential but also retributive, and a human emperor who thinks he has been allotted the nature of a god (§367).

The second theme also recurs through the treatise, because Philo constantly recounts not only the events that occurred, but also how people reacted to them in their evaluations of what was happening. The most striking case concerns Philo himself. It seemed as if the first meeting of the embassy with Gaius had a positive result. Their case was admitted and Gaius promised to deal with it at a later time. The other members were pleased, but Philo, older and more cautious than they, was suspicious. Inciting his understanding (λογισμός) to action, he concluded that Gaius must have had an ulterior motive for giving them this preferential treatment (§§181–183). It gave him sleepless nights (§184). But then they heard much worse news. Gaius had ordered a huge statue to be placed in the temple (§188). Together they discussed the situation and expressed what their minds (νοῦς) prompted them to say. In despair they wonder whether, if the causes that they are pleading are lost, they will be able to get home safely. To which Philo replies that truly noble persons educated in the sacred writings are always optimistic (§196):

Perhaps these trials have been sent to test the present generation, to see how they stand in relation to virtue and if they have been educated to bear misfortunes with understanding and fortitude (λογισμοῖς ἰσχυρογνώμοσιν) and not collapse straight away. All help from humans is gone. Let it go. But let there remain in our souls an indestructible hope in God the Saviour, who has often saved the nation from impossibly difficult circumstances.

It seems to me that this entire passage is meant to illustrate the *topos* outlined at the beginning of the treatise. Despite his age, Philo is made nervous by his suspicions.³² The future looks bleak. The following statement is a considerable improvement, because it is based on the promises of scripture. But even at the very end of the treatise pessimism prevails. The meeting with Gaius left them in great doubt, and various considerations (λογισμοί) dragged them down into the depths again (§372).

The final much discussed words of the treatise indicate that a reversal will take place, to be recounted in a “palinode.” But this is in fact already made clear at the very outset. For already in the following section of the prologue (§3) Philo looks back at the happenings he recounts. As Pelletier rightly remarks,³³ the aorist tense of κριθεῖσαι indicates that the outcome of the events is no longer in doubt. It should be enough to convince even the sceptics of the fact that God exercises providence over humankind and especially the Jews. The connection between the opening paragraphs is made by means of the strong adversative πλὴν. This suggests that the ‘epistemological’ theme is being continued. The bedimmed state of the understanding should not longer occur. The events that have taken place, culminating in the assassination of Gaius, should be sufficient to convince everyone that history is not a matter of chance. They could see these events with their eyes, but had to use the understanding to recognize what they meant, namely the working of providence in history. Given the first person plural with which Philo begins (§1), we must assume that Jews too were among those who needed to be convinced.

The theme of divine providence and its care for the Jews is unquestionably the main connecting theme of the treatise, and also of its

³² Smallwood, *Philonis Alexandrini* 255 remarks: “Philo’s prejudice makes him distrust and misinterpret what was probably a perfectly reasonable attitude on Gaius’ part.”

³³ Pelletier, *Philon Legatio ad Caicum* 62 n. 6.

companion piece, the *In Flaccum*,³⁴ recurring at regular intervals whenever there is a crisis in the fortunes of the Jews and an unexpected positive reversal takes place.³⁵ Philo first states it in general terms, as if it was a philosophical proposition. One recalls the fifth and final lesson to be learnt from the creation account as outlined at the end of *De opificio mundi*.³⁶ But it is immediately made more specific by the reference to ‘the suppliant race’ (τὸ ἱκετικὸν γένος). As Birnbaum has pointed out,³⁷ the phrase is unique in Philo, but the idea that it describes is common throughout the Philonic corpus. Israel—and within it especially the Levites and the proselytes—is the suppliant of God, who favors the nation with his mercy and grace.³⁸ That the title is not only descriptive, but also corresponds to specific acts of supplication is made clear at the climax of the work as we have it. The ambassadors are trying to put their case before Gaius, but he ignores them and they become totally disheartened. Their souls then went forth and supplicated the true God and he took compassion on them (§366, cf. §196). The same occurs at the dramatic climax of *In Flaccum* (§§121–125).

It is worth noting, however, that at this point in our text there is no indication that Philo is specifically talking about the Jews (the name is in fact not used until §115). Even the reference to the race having received the Father of the universe as its special allotment is not very specific. But Borgen is certainly right to point out the quite similar language in the later books of the Exposition of the Law.³⁹ And Philo apparently does not wish to leave his reader in any doubt. In the next two sections he expatiates on what the phrase ‘suppliant race’ means, explaining it in terms of Israel, ‘he who sees God’.

³⁴ Cf. the far too brief analysis of Frick, *Divine Providence* 187–189. In one of the manuscripts the latter treatise is even the alternative title *Περὶ προνοίας*.

³⁵ Cf. §§68, 220, 336, *Flacc.* 125, 170, and the comments of Smallwood, *Philonis Alexandrini* 272; Frick, *Divine Providence* 187.

³⁶ §§171–172, on which see my comments in *Philo On the Creation of the Cosmos*, Philo of Alexandria Commentary Series 1 (Leiden: Brill, 2001) 400.

³⁷ *Place of Judaism* 106 n. 22.

³⁸ See the analyses of V. Nikiprowetzky, ‘Les suppliants chez Philon d’Alexandrie’, *REJ* 122 (1963) 241–278, reprinted in *Études Philoniennes* (Paris, 1996) 10–43 (ending with a reference to *Flacc.* 121–125), and Birnbaum, *Place of Judaism* 106–107. It should be noted that ‘Suppliants’ (ἱκέτῃς) is the alternative title for *Contempl.*

³⁹ Esp. *Spec.* 4.180, *Virt.* 34, cited by Borgen, *Philo of Alexandria* 182; but cf. also *Spec.* 2.217, *Virt.* 79, 184–186 (proselytes). On the theme of inheritance see further M. Harl, *Philon Quis rerum divinarum heres sit*, Les Œuvres de Philon d’Alexandrie 15 (Paris, 1966) 53–56.

As we have already noted above, the identification with Israel and its etymology must be regarded as very unexpected in the context of Philo's entire corpus of writings. Birnbaum's statistics show that it almost never occurs outside the Allegorical Commentary.⁴⁰ Of the 49 occurrences in which Israel is related to the etymology, only two are found in the Exposition (*Abr.* 57, *Praem.* 44) and two in the *Quaestiones* (*QG* 3.49, 4.233). 44 cases, i.e. almost 90%, are found in the Allegorical Commentary. The single other case that remains is our text. Borgen is certainly justified in drawing attention to *Praem.* 36–44, in which Jacob is described as having the name Israel and his vision of God is analysed at some length.⁴¹ The other text in the Exposition, *Abr.* 57, is perhaps even more relevant, because there Philo relates Israel's name to the *race* (ἔθνος) that drew its origin from the three patriarchs.

There is, however, a significant difference between these two texts from the Exposition and what we find in *Legat.* In the former two texts Philo uses philosophical doctrines in order to explain what 'seeing God' actually involves, very extensively in the *Praem.* passage, less so in *Abr.* 57–59. In our passage he does three things. Firstly we read that seeing God is 'the most precious of all public or private possessions', i.e. both for the individual and collectively for the nation. Secondly he makes a comparison between the value of seeing our elders and seeing God. Thirdly he explains that seeing God means transcending the realm of becoming and gazing on the divine. God is then described by means of a number of primary epithets. Using a hyperbolic form of expression involving the comparative form of various adjectives for which four exact parallels are found elsewhere,⁴² Philo strongly emphasizes God's supreme transcendence. What is *lacking* is any indication of what that seeing involves, both in terms of the epistemological activity of the subject doing the seeing and the restrictions which result from the nature of the object being seen. Elsewhere in his *œuvre* Philo frequently emphasizes that the viewer is dazzled by the sight and that God can only be seen or known in terms of his existence, not in terms of his essence.⁴³

⁴⁰ See Birnbaum, *Place of Judaism* 47–49, 65 n.

⁴¹ Borgen, *Philo of Alexandria* 183.

⁴² *Opif.* 8, *Praem.* 40 (another "Israel" text), *Contempl.* 2, *QE* 2.68 (Greek text in Marcus, Philo Loeb Classical Library Supplement, 2.256).

⁴³ See esp. *Spec.* 1.32–40, *Praem.* 40–46, *Post.* 168–169, *Fug.* 141, 164, etc.

None of this is mentioned here. The choice of epithets too is interesting. Identification with the ‘first good’ and the ‘beautiful’ is parallel to the other texts mentioned.⁴⁴ But why the mention of God’s blessed and felicitous nature?

Once again it is helpful to relate Philo’s formulations here to the contents of the rest of the treatise.⁴⁵ Respect for his elders is exactly what Gaius did not show, as the story of the miserable fate of his mentor Macro amply proves (§§32–75). More importantly, Israel’s gift of being able to transcend the realm of becoming and see God is recalled when Philo reaches the main theme of the work, Gaius’ blasphemous attempt at deification and his attempt to rival the supreme God worshipped by the Jews. The following three texts must be compared:

§5. . . . how much greater a support for excellence and goodness will be found in souls that have been taught to transcend (ὑπερκύψασαι) the realm of becoming and fix their sight on what is ungenerated (τὸ ἀγέννητον) and divine . . .

§75. . . . he [Gaius] no longer thought it worthy of himself to remain within the limits of human nature, but transcended them (ὑπερέκυπτε) in his eagerness to be regarded as a god.

§118. . . . and that change [in the Jews’ ancestral customs] was not something trivial, but the most important thing that exists, when the generated and destructible nature of a human being was seemingly deified (θεοπλαστήσαι) into what is ungenerated (ἀγέννητον) and indestructible, which [the nation] judged to be the most serious of blasphemies—for it would be easier for God to change into a man than for a man to change into God—as well as including the supreme vices of faithlessness and ingratitude towards the Benefactor of the entire cosmos, who by means of his power bestows generous blessings on all parts of the universe.

The theme recurs at the very climax of the work as we have it, when God takes mercy on the Jews and Gaius is described as saying:

These people seem to be not so much wicked as unfortunate (δυστυχεῖς) as well as foolish in not believing that I have inherited (κεκλήρωμαι) the nature of a god.

We also have perhaps an explanation why Philo emphasizes God’s blessedness in his description of divine transcendence in §5. Gaius

⁴⁴ “Good” and “beautiful” in *Opif.* 8, the “good” in *Praem.* 40, *Contempl.* 2.

⁴⁵ Only Meeks has observed some of these connections.

was already considered to have attained an unparalleled prosperity when he ascended to the throne (cf. §9). Now he also aspired to the supreme felicity of a god. Only the Jews were able to see through this blasphemous attempt (cf. §211).

A further question to be raised is what Philo exactly means when he says that Israel has been educated (πεπαίδευνται) to see what is ungenerated and divine. Borgen rightly suspects that the expression refers to being schooled in the laws of Moses.⁴⁶ Two further texts make this certain. When Gaius first broached his plan for deification, he was displeased at the Jews, for only they opposed him, 'having been taught from the cradle by parents and tutors and teachers and by the far higher authority of the holy laws and also by the unwritten customs to recognize God the one father and maker of the cosmos' (§115).⁴⁷ Petronius, Governor of Syria, was much more sensible. He recognized that 'all human beings are zealous in guarding their customs, but this applies especially to the Jewish nation, for they consider their laws to be oracles sent by God and they are trained from their youngest years in this doctrine, carrying images of what has been commanded them enshrined in their souls' (§210). In fact, what 'seeing God' amounts to is strict and uncompromising observance of the first and second commandment, the subject of the whole of book I of *De specialibus legibus*. It is telling how Philo concludes that work. For the disciples of Moses, he writes, this 'knowledge of the One who IS' is the culminating point (τέλος) of well-being and an age-long life, for the law instructs them that all who cleave to God shall live, which is a necessary and philosophical doctrine (§345).

But now we come to the most difficult part of our text. The problem is caused by Philo's use of the term *logos*. In my translation I deliberately left it untranslated. With few exceptions, translators and commentators have translated it with 'reason' or an equivalent. The reason for this is plain. They quite naturally take the explanatory γάρ at the beginning of §6 to refer back to the previous sentence, in which the transcendence of God is strongly emphasized. What would be more natural that to conclude that Philo here further explains how humanity is unable to attain to knowledge of God

⁴⁶ Borgen, *Philo of Alexandria* 241; cf. also Birnbaum, *Place of Judaism* 191, though she does not explicitly focus on this expression.

⁴⁷ I accept Colson's interpretation of πολλὸν πρότερον, *Philo in Ten Volumes* 10.57. For this conviction cf. esp. *Opif.* 170 (the five lessons of piety).

through its unaided faculties? This is the basis for both the mystical and the 'legalistic' interpretations outlined in our second section above.

Philo himself will of course have been aware that the term *logos* in Greek is strongly multi-vocal. He himself uses it more than 1400 times in the extant Greek works.⁴⁸ Leisegang's analysis of the word gives three basic meanings (*oratio, ratio, dei verbum et ratio*), subdivided into no less than 30 different connotations.⁴⁹ So one would think it was incumbent on Philo to make plain to his reader what the term signifies in the present context. In the first part of §6, until the verbs ὑπονοοστεῖ and ὑπορρεῖ, the meaning is quite unclear. But thereafter he three times uses words that refer to language and articulated sound ('the right names', 'an articulate voice', 'accurate and suitable words (or verbs)'). The fourth term δῆλωσις, which I have translated "elucidation," also most naturally refers to linguistic explanation in the present context. Comparison with other texts in which Philo speaks about δῆλωσις confirm this quite clearly. A very clear example is found at *Migr.* 77–78, where Philo gives an allegorical interpretation of the figures of Moses and his brother Aaron. Moses symbolizes the *nous*, which needs no help when occupied with intelligible things, but when it focuses on sense-perceptible things it needs the help of Aaron, the *logos*, as an interpreter for the elucidation of what it has undergone.⁵⁰ It seems to me, therefore, that Mangey was fully justified in rendering λόγος with *sermo* in his Latin version.⁵¹

⁴⁸ According to P. Borgen, K. Fuglseth and R. Skarsten, *The Philo Index: A Complete Greek Word Index to the Writings of Philo of Alexandria* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Leiden: Brill, 2000), it occurs 1413 times.

⁴⁹ See H. Leisegang, *Philonis Alexandrini opera*, vol. 7 *Indices* (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1926–30) 490–503. Our text is referred to (not quoted) on 502 as adjunct to *Mut.* 15 under the heading III 7 *divinae rationis cum hominibus commercium*, which does not seem very to the point.

⁵⁰ Cf. also *Her.* 303, *Mos.* 2.128, *Spec.* 4.69 (note the λόγος προφορικός). *Spec.* 1.65 and 4.49 both speak of δῆλωσις in connection with the utterances of prophecy.

⁵¹ T. Mangey, *Philonis Judaei opera quae reperiri potuerunt omnia*, 2 vols. (London, 1742) 2.546. He is followed by J. Drummond in his paraphrase, *Philo Judaeus, or The Jewish-Alexandrian Philosophy in its Development and Completion*, 2 vols. (London, 1888; repr. Amsterdam, 1969) 2.31. F. W. Kohnke in his German translation (L. Cohn, I. Heinemann, M. Adler and W. Theiler, *Philo von Alexandria: Die Werke in deutscher Übersetzung*, 7 vols. [Breslau-Berlin, 1909–64] 176) equivocates, rendering the term with 'der Geist und seine Sprache'. Colson, *Philo in Ten Volumes*, 10.5, argues that Mangey's rendering is 'perhaps more in accordance with the words that follow, but not so Philonic in thought'. This impressionistic argument is quite unfounded.

The best translation here is 'language' rather than 'speech', because Philo is speaking in very general terms and 'speech' is perhaps too human to be applied to the heavens.

A brief word should also be devoted to Philo's phrase 'unable to use the right names as a basis (ἐπιβάθρα) for elucidation'. As we saw earlier, Smallwood substitutes ἐπιβάθραις (steps on a ladder).⁵² Pelletier thinks we have here an allusion to Jacob's ladder. But there are no clear cases in which Philo uses the word in the sense of a 'ladder'. An ἐπιβάθρα is a "standing place" or a "stepping stone" for something. This gives it the meaning of 'basis' or 'foundation'. The best parallel is the curious allegory in *Spec.* 3.179, where cutting of the hand that touched the testicles teaches us to excise all godless thoughts (λογισμοί) which use as a basis (ἐπιβάθρα χρωμένους) all that comes into being.⁵³ There is no support for a mystical interpretation in terms of a ladder up to God in this phrase.

We now come to the crux of our interpretation. What is the failure of language that Philo refers to here? The first thing to notice is that distinction, central to Philo's theology, between the One who IS and his powers. The former is beyond comprehension and description, as Philo habitually emphasizes.⁵⁴ Philo refers here to God, or Being, as he is in himself. In order to give this view sufficient emphasis he adds a statement in the form of the rhetorical figure of the hyperbole.⁵⁵ Even the heavens could not articulate God's nature. But in the present context this is not so relevant. Philo is above all interested in God's relation to creation and humankind, and especially to the fate of the Jewish people. This is the province of God's powers, which are active in the world of becoming, and so can intervene in what happens in human affairs.

Here too the powers of language fall short. The problem is that Philo does not explicitly tell us why. But at this point we should

⁵² See above at n. 12.

⁵³ For the remaining examples of ἐπιβάθρα see *Agr.* 107, *Conf.* 2, *Somn.* 2.51.

⁵⁴ Cf. esp. *Mut.* 1–17, *Spec.* 1.32–50, L. A. Montes-Peral, *Akatalēptos theos: der unfassbare Gott*, ALGHJ 16 (Leiden: Brill, 1987); D. T. Runia, "Naming and Knowing: Themes in Philonic Theology with Special Reference to the *De mutatione nominum*," in R. van den Broek, T. Baarda and J. Mansfeld (edd.), *Knowledge of God in the Graeco-Roman world*, EPRO 112 (Leiden: Brill, 1988) 69–91.

⁵⁵ A fine parallel is found at *Mos.* 2.239: 'If the entire heaven was resolved into a voice, shall it have the ability to recount even a part of your excellences?' Cf. also *Spec.* 1.44, *Deus* 79, *Plant.* 126. The figure reminds us of the final verse of John's Gospel, which finds good parallels at Philo, *Post.* 144, *Mos.* 1.213.

recall the remarkable fact, noted at the outset of our article,⁵⁶ that Philo here alone in all his works includes a *providential* power among the divine powers. This may provide us with the hint we need. What language cannot do is fully describe how amazingly God's powers intervened in the fortunes of the Jewish nation during the events that Philo will describe in the treatise. The relevant texts have already been noted above.⁵⁷ In the process some people were blessed, others received punishment. For this reason Philo adds in §7 an explanation about the workings of God's beneficial and punitive powers. It is not given for human beings to obtain a precise and detailed insight into the workings of divine providence. Why should so many innocent people have been killed or otherwise affected by the dreadful events of the "pogrom" that occurred in Alexandria in 38 CE? Philo is convinced, however, that ultimately God is in control of events and that even these terrible events will serve an educational purpose. He does not doubt that God is both good and just.⁵⁸

A contextual reading of these first seven sections shows, in my view, that they should not be just read as a rambling piece of theology, but were inspired by the subject matter of the treatise. Implicitly, therefore, Philo is alluding to a literary topos that he often uses at the beginning of a treatise or a discussion, namely that the powers of language are insufficient to do justice to the subject matter of the work. Well-known examples are found at *Opif.* 5 and *Contempl.* 1. Because the subject matter of *Legat.* has to do with God's providential intervention in human affairs, and concretely in the case of Israel, this topos is stated in theological garb. Language fails, not only on account of the undoubted shortcomings of the author, but also on account of the fact that God's dealings with creation are not fully accessible to the human thought.

An objection may, however, be directed against this interpretation. Does Philo not explicitly link, by means of the word γάρ ("for") at the beginning of §6, the theme of the failure of the *logos* to the transcendence of God emphasized so strongly in §5? My answer to this objection would be that it seems to me that this γάρ is better

⁵⁶ See above at n. 4.

⁵⁷ See above at n. 35.

⁵⁸ See O. Leaman, *Evil and Suffering in Jewish Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1995) 33–47, and also my forthcoming article on Philo's theodicy in A. Laato and J. C. de Moor (edd.), *Handbook of Theodicy*.

taken not to refer to what immediately precedes it, but rather to §3, which states the main theme of the introductory passage, namely the undeniable reality of God's providential intervention in the history of the Jews. If this view is correct, this means we should in fact take the whole of §§4–5 as a kind of parenthesis, explaining firstly what is meant by the 'suppliant race' in §3, and then what is meant by the etymology of Israel as "seeing God."

It might be further objected that Philo does not make his use of the *topos* about the limitations of the powers of language very clear in §§6–7, if indeed that is what he is trying to convey. Does this not mean that once again we are forced to return to the hypothesis that our text is not complete and that it is probable that a section of text has fallen out between §7 and §8?

It cannot be doubted that the transition in the text at this point is rather abrupt. It is certainly not impossible that a section of text has fallen out. But we can look at one more piece of evidence, namely how the section that follows, i.e. §§8–21, relates to the introductory passage. Here, as has already been noted, we confront another explanatory *gar*.⁵⁹ Although the German translator Kohnke holds on to the view that there is a lacuna, he is certainly right in concluding that the entire section §§8–21 is meant as a paradigm case of the failure of understanding postulated in §§1–2. The explanatory γάρ in §8 thus applies to entire section §§1–7. The participle at the outset in §8 (τίς γὰρ ἰδών) clearly picks up the role of *logismos* and the eye of the mind in §2. Even clearer is Philo's reference at the end of the passage, when he comments on the premature and ill-advised joy felt by Gaius' subjects when he first recovered from the illness that threatened him (§§20–21):

... as if changing from a life without a guardian to being settled under a guardian and shepherd of a more domesticated herd, they were full of joy in ignorance of the truth. For the human mind is blind with regard to the perception of its real advantage and takes resort to guesswork and conjecture instead of knowledge.

In fact this passage rather usefully complements the earlier passage in §2, because it explains how human ignorance can come about. Interpreting the significance of events is a matter of guesswork until God makes his intentions clear through his actions.

⁵⁹ See above, n. 7.

But there are quite a few other hints in this passage that show that Philo is thinking of his opening passage and its implicit anticipatory references to the comparison between God and the arrogant young ruler who absurdly wishes to usurp God's place. We note the following references:

- §8 Gaius assumes rulership over the whole of the earth and sea.
- §8 His prosperity transcends every description (compare §5, §6).
- §9 He has inherited a huge amount of goods (in contrast to Israel, who has inherited only God, §3).
- §9 He has at his disposal countless forces or powers (παμπληθεῖς δυνάμεις) (but these are no match for God's powers, §§6–7).
- §11 Gaius excelled his monarchic predecessors in his huge supply of goods (i.e. like a god on earth), full of prosperity (εὐτυχία) almost attaining to blessedness (εὐδαιμονία) (but nothing to compare with God's transcendent well-being, §5).
- §13 It seems like the proverbial times of Kronos, the moment (καίρός) giving equality before the law (but this was to be cruelly reversed, until God intervenes in the present καιρός §3).
- §20 Gaius seems like a good and just shepherd for his flock (but actually this is God's role, the true 'support for excellence and goodness', §5).

Examples could be further multiplied. The antithesis between God and Gaius is prepared in both the introductory passage and its sequel. It will dominate the rest of the treatise. Unfortunately, since we lack the "palinode" (§367), we are unable to read Philo's account of how the showdown ends.

4. Conclusion

A contextual reading of the complex passage *Legat.* 1–7 has proved a useful exercise. Although the passage has few of the formal characteristics of an exordium,⁶⁰ its contents are closely related to the subject matter of the entire treatise. The chief theme is focused on the role of divine providence. No one can reflect on the events that

⁶⁰ On these in Philo see Loveday Alexander, *The Preface to Luke's Gospel: Literary Convention and Social Context in Luke 1.1–4 and Acts 1.1*, SNTSMS 78 (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1993) 157–160; Runia, *Philo On the Creation* 99.

Philo is about to recount without concluding that God is concerned with human affairs, and especially those of the Jewish people. The introduction of the theological section in §§4–7 has a triple purpose: (1) to explain the special relationship between God and Israel, here identified with the Jewish people; (2) to further locate the role of providence within the divine nature; (3) to anticipate the theme of the purported rivalry between God and megalomaniac emperor Gaius which will play such a prominent role in the remainder of the work. Especially the role of the third purpose has hitherto received insufficient attention.

Throughout my analysis I have emphasized that we are dealing here with a difficult text. The problems of interpretation are caused by the fact that Philo does not make all the connections in his train of thought entirely clear. This has been the reason that scholars have thought the passage incomplete, a conclusion that is in my view not necessary, though it cannot be entirely ruled out either. It seems to me that in the passage at least one ‘epistemological’ difficulty remains which has defied full resolution. Philo appears to combine two quite different meanings of mental vision (ὄψις).⁶¹ In the opening two sections vision involves the correct discernment of historical events. In §§4–5, however, vision has to do with “seeing God,” the special role of Israel. We have interpreted this vision in terms of the recognition of God’s existence and the observance of the first two commandments. I believe the equivocation has to be allowed to stand. It is even possible that Philo has introduced it deliberately. Devotion to God and observance of his commands do not automatically mean recognition and comprehension of his acts. Philo indicates in the narrative that he himself fell short in this respect. Ultimately his pessimism expressed during the course of events (cf. §182) proved unjustified. God took mercy on his people (§367) and his worst fears were not realized. The Jewish community of Alexandria was rescued from annihilation, during his lifetime at least.

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⁶¹ The actual term occurs in §2 and §5.

PARAENESIS TERMINOLOGY IN PHILO

Troels Engberg-Pedersen

Peder Borgen's scholarly work has been focused on three bodies of text: John, Paul, Philo. In choosing to honor Borgen by looking at a number of terms in Philo for what is broadly known in New Testament scholarship as paraenesis or exhortation, I may hope to add, if no more than potentially, to the understanding of the other two writers as well. After all, John speaks of the Holy Spirit as ὁ παράκλητος, using one of the terms we shall also study here: παρακαλεῖν. Similarly, of course, the concept of paraenesis is central to Paul's thought, though here again through his use of that other term: παρακαλεῖν.

In this essay my aim is quite restricted. I wish to discuss the proper translation of a number of terms in the paraenesis field as used by Philo. I shall employ the text and translation in the Loeb edition of Philo's works and will constantly be assessing the correctness of that translation, not because it is bad, but rather because in the light of its more or less authoritative status it brings out well that there is an urgent need to rethink the semantics of Philo's terminology in the area. The investigation is part of a larger Scandinavian research project on paraenesis in antiquity that will hopefully issue in a volume of essays on the topic within a few years. In that context I will personally argue, among other things, that the quite common modern translation of the Greek terms παραινεῖν and παραινέσις as "exhort" and "exhortation" is wrong. Παραινεῖν basically means "advise" or "enjoin" and παραινέσις, "advice" or "injunction". "Exhort" and "exhortation" should be kept as translations for παρακαλεῖν and παράκλησις, both of which may also be translated "appeal". Finally, the third member of the triad, προτρέπειν/προτρέπεσθαι and προτροπή, should be translated as "urge" or "incite" and "urging" or "incitement" respectively.

Here I shall argue that these translations hold for Philo too. In discussing his use of the three terms we shall also have occasion to comment on a few among a wider range of terms in the same field: ὑφηγεῖσθαι ("instruct" or "counsel") and ὑφήγησις ("instruction" or "counsel"); ὑποτίθεσθαι ("suggest" or "enjoin") and ὑποθήκη ("suggestion" or "injunction"); νουθετεῖν ("admonish" or "warn") and νουθεσία

(“admonition” or “warning”); σωφρονίζειν (“correct” or “chasten”) and σωφρονισμός (“correction” or “chastening”).

A whole range of issues connected with Philo’s handling of these terms cannot be discussed here. For instance, does his use of the terms have any specific philosophical pedigree, be it Platonic, Aristotelian or Stoic? Also, is there a developed psychology of action underlying his use of the paraenetic terms? Instead of going into these issues, I shall discuss a number of actual uses of the terms in the Philonic corpus, aiming to settle their proper translation. Basically, I am reading a corpus of texts and attempting to elicit the intrinsic logic of a network of interacting terms. All through, of course, I am also relying on a broader knowledge of Greek as reflected, for instance, in the best lexica (e.g. Liddell-Scott-Jones).

Can one be sure in advance that there is a certain, reasonably fine-grained logic to be found in Philo’s use of these terms? Certainly not *a priori*. Nor *a posteriori* if that is defined by the very loose translations of the terms to be found in the Loeb edition. Methodologically, therefore, the decision for or against the readings I shall give must depend on two issues: whether I shall be able to explain away in a convincing manner specific usages in the Philonic corpus that initially appear to go against the fairly restricted meanings that I shall attach to each individual term; and whether the ascription of a more restricted meaning can be seen to add significantly to the understanding of individual passages.

A Basic Philonic Text: Leg. 1.92–94

We may begin by considering the relationship between two members of our basic triad: παραινεῖν and προτρέπειν/προτρέπεσθαι. A passage in *Leg.* 1 (92–94) may serve as a basic text to which we shall repeatedly recur. Here as elsewhere I quote the Loeb translation (abbreviated L) with Greek terms and alternative translations added where needed.

Philo has been speaking of two types of “Adam” or mind (νοῦς), the heavenly one that was made after the image of God and the earthly and perishable one (see *Leg.* 1.90). He continues (92):

Now it is to this being, and not to the being created after His image and after the original idea, that God gives the command [ἐντέλλεται—using the term that was actually quoted in 1.90 from Gen 2:16]. For the latter, even without urging [καὶ δίχα προτροπῆς], possesses virtue

instinctively; but the former, independently of instruction [διδασκαλία], could have no part in wisdom [φρόνησις]. 93. There is a difference between these three—πρόσταξις [L: “injunction”, TE-P: “ordinance”, “command”], prohibition [ἀπαγόρευσις], command [ἐντολή—as taken over from the quotation] accompanied by [NO: καί, “and”] παραίνεσις [L: “exhortation”, TE-P: “injunction”]. For prohibition deals with wrongdoings [ἁμαρτήματα] and is addressed to the bad man [φαῦλος], πρόσταξις concerns duties rightly done [κατορθώματα], and παραίνεσις is addressed to the neutral man [μέσος], the man who is neither bad nor good [σπουδαῖος]: for he is neither sinning, to lead anyone to forbid him, nor is he doing right as right reason [ὀρθὸς λόγος] enjoins [πρόσταξις, “commands”], but has need of παραίνεσις, which teaches [διδάσκειν, NB; by contrast, the law’s ἀπαγόρευσις and πρόσταξις do not just “teach”] him to refrain from evil things, and incites [προτρέπειν] him to aim [ἐφίεσθαι] at things noble. 94. There is no need, then, to προστάττειν [L: “give injunctions”, TE-P: “command”] or ἀπαγορεύειν [“give prohibitions”] or παραινεῖν [L: “give exhortations”, TE-P: “enjoin”] to the perfect man [ὁ τέλειος] formed after the (Divine) image, for none of these does the perfect man require. The bad man has need of πρόσταξις and prohibition, and the child [ὁ νήπιος] of παραίνεσις and teaching [διδασκαλία]. Just so the perfect master of music or letters requires none of the directions [παράγγελμα] that apply to those arts, whereas the man who stumbles [σφάλλεσθαι] over the subjects of his study [θεωρήματα] does require what we may call laws or rules [νόμοι] with their προστάξεις [L: “injunctions”, TE-P: “commands”] and prohibitions, while one who is now [OR: “already”, ἄρτι] beginning to learn [ὁ ἄρτι μανθάνων] requires teaching [διδασκαλία].

*Παραίνεσις is not Exhortation, but Injunction
Focused on Behavior (Acts)*

If one thing is clear from our basic text, it is that there is a difference between πρόσταξις (ἀπαγόρευσις) and παραίνεσις. Since the latter is in two places connected with προτροπή and προτρέπειν and all through with διδασκαλία and διδάσκειν, it makes initial sense to express the contrast as the Loeb edition does throughout by translating πρόσταξις as “injunction” and παραίνεσις as “exhortation”. However, the first basic point that we need to make and argue for is this: in Philo, παραίνεσις (and cognates) does not mean “exhortation,” but “advice” or “injunction.” Here are some—slightly overlapping—arguments.

(1) Passages where παραινεῖν is clearly conjoined with expressions indicating that the παραίνεσις is directed towards actions, things to be done. *Leg.* 3.244–245 is a good example. Here Philo speaks of

Sara as the ἄρχουσα ἀρετή (TE-P: “ruling virtue”) whom one must “obey” (πείθεσθαι). And indeed, “when he had not yet become perfect” (τέλειος), Abraham “wisely” did obey her παραινούση ἃ δεῖ, that is, when enjoining him *what to do*. Furthermore, what Sara did was to “advise” him (a correct Loeb rendering of the term used, which is συμβουλεύειν) to go to Hagar. Philo adds that had he not obeyed, there even is an oracle (χρησμός) of God that *orders* (κελεύειν) the following: “In *all that* [πάντα ὅσα] Sarah saith to thee listen [ἄκουε] to her voice”. And he concludes as follows: “Let that which seems good to virtue be (a) *law for* each one of us. For if we choose to listen to [ἄκουειν] *all the things* that [again πάντα ὅσα] virtue παραινεῖ, we shall be happy.” This is all concerned with certain things to be done, things that one may either advise or even order somebody to do. The Loeb translator probably sensed that παραινεῖν does not mean “exhort” here. For he translated it as “recommend” in both places. But a better rendering is “enjoin” (with “injunction” for παραινέσις). That has the proper directedness towards things to be done, which makes it *like* ordering or commanding (κελεύειν here, προστάττειν in our earlier passage). And so it is a fit term for stating what virtue does when “that which seems good to virtue acts as a law for each one of us”. On the other hand, παραινεῖν is clearly different from ordering and commanding, as it should be according to our basic passage. For it has συμβουλεύειν (“advise”) as a synonym. And Abraham obeyed Sara’s injunction in his “wisdom” (though before he was perfect). He did not just mechanically do what somebody ordered him to do.

Another example is *Abr.* 256, where Philo speaks of Abraham’s reaction to Sara’s death. Here it is reason acting as a counsellor [σύμβουλος, Loeb rightly] that παραινεῖ. The Loeb translator first renders the verb by means of “exhortations”, but then changes it—rightly—to “advice”. He should not have introduced the “exhortations” in the first place.

A further example is *Decal.* 87, where Philo speaks of what we call conscience: an internal “monitor” (ἐλεγχος) who may act as an accuser (κατήγορος) or as a judge (δικαστής) of the soul or the whole person. In the latter capacity he “instructs [διδάσκει, right], admonishes [νουθετεῖ, right] and παραινεῖ it [the soul] to change its ways [μεταβάλλεθαι]. And if he has the strength [ἰσχύει] to persuade [πείθειν] it, . . .” The Loeb translator renders παραινεῖ here as “exhorts”.

But a number of features suggest that “enjoins” is a better choice: the use of διδάσκειν and νουθετεῖν as quasi-synonyms; the fact that the direct grammatical object of παραινεῖ in the Greek is an action or some form of behavior (μεταβάλλεθαι); finally the fact that it is all a matter of persuasion (πείθειν) addressing the understanding.

Another clear example of παραινέσεις being directed towards action is *Spec.* 4.219. Speaking of Moses Philo says: “These laws he gives [νομοθετεῖ] to each single person but there are other more general commands [καθολικώτεραι . . . προστάξεις] which he addresses to the whole nation in common, advising them *how to behave* [παραινῶν ὡς προσενεκτέον] not only to friends and allies. . . .” Here the Loeb translation is exactly right. πρόσταξις is “command” and παραινεῖν is sufficiently close to this to be explicitly concerned with how to behave.

Other passages might be mentioned. But the last one leads directly to the next group:

(2) Passages where παραινεῖν is closely connected with expressions that speak about what the law says. These passages should not be taken to go against our basic passage from *Leg.* 1 with its clear distinction between πρόσταξις and παραινέσεις. In fact, once that distinction has been drawn, it is a Philonic point, as we shall see, that some of the law’s commands are *not* in fact just commands or orders, but more like παραινέσεις. What matters here is that the latter are also so closely connected with the dicta of the law that they cannot just be “exhortations”.

One passage that shows this is *Ebr.* 26. In 25, Philo has spoken of “the direct injunction of the law (νόμου διειρηκότος), not ‘to go with the many to do evil,’” quoting Exod 23:2. In 26 he then states: “And so most excellent is the advice [παραινέσεις, right] that we should not keep company with the many but with the few”. The use of “injunction” for what the law does is hardly entirely appropriate. The law “*tell[s] fully or distinctly*” (LSJ, s.v. διειπον) what to do. In any case, what the law “distinctly tells” is explicitly called a παραινέσις. This makes it almost impossible to translate παραινεῖν merely as “exhort”—as the Loeb translator rightly sensed. Other passages referring to the law’s ordinances as παραινέσεις are *Her.* 114, *Virt.* 121, and 163.

Παραίνεσις Advises, But Does Not Order

So παραίνεσις (and cognates) does not just have the rather general, vague and unspecific meaning of “exhortation”. It is more focused, more clearly directed towards specific behavior. It “points” to such action, informing the addressees of it and drawing their attention to it in order to make them do it. In this respect, παραίνεσις is logically similar to the orders or commands given by a law.

However, our basic text was also quite clear that there is a difference in logic between commands and prohibitions on the one hand (πρόσταξις and ἀπαγόρευσις) and παραίνεσις and teaching (διδασκαλία) on the other. Thus while παραίνεσις is similar to πρόσταξις in one respect, it differs in another. The second basic point we need to make and argue for is this: in Philo, παραίνεσις (and cognates) stands for an “injunction” that “advises”, not one that “orders;” it is “symbolleutic”, not “apodictic” (or “prostactic”). Here is a set of arguments.

(1) Passages that contrast πρόσταξις and παραίνεσις. *Legat.* 70 is a good example. Philo is quoting what some people said in defense of the emperor’s murder of his erstwhile counsellor, Macro. “What reason,” they said, “had he [Macro] for reversing his part and transferring the subject to the rank of ruler, and Gaius, the emperor, to the place of a subject? To command, which is what he did, befits best the sovereign, and to obey, which is what he deemed Gaius should submit to, befits the subject” (69). Philo comments: “For in their thoughtlessness they gave the name of commanding [πρόσταξις] to παραίνεσις [L: “exhortation”, TE-P: “injunction”] and of the ruler [ἄρχων] to the counsellor [σύμβουλος].”

Leg. 1.299 is just as explicit. “These and similar injunctions [no Greek substantive, only a relative in neuter plural] to piety are given in the law (νομοθετεῖται) in the form of [κατά] direct commands [προστάξεις, Loeb rightly] and prohibitions [ἀπαγορεύσεις]. Others [again a relative] which have now to be described are κατά τὰς φιλοσόφους ὑποθήκας καὶ παραινήσεις.” The Loeb translates the last six words as “of the nature of homilies giving admonitions and exhortations”. This is broadly correct, but seriously misleading in detail. What Philo means to say is rather that those other statements are in the form of the suggestions and injunctions given in philosophy. The connection made here of ὑποθήκαι and παραινήσεις to philosophy is vastly important, but cannot unfortunately be properly discussed in this essay. What matters to us is only the clear contrast between πρόσταξις

and παραίνεις and the fact that by connecting the latter to philosophy Philo also indicates the basis for the contrast: παραίνεις apparently appeals to the understanding in a manner that πρόσταξις does not.

This leads us to the next group of texts:

(2) Passages that connect παραίνεις (and cognates) with terms for teaching and instruction. Our basic text is of course relevant here when it repeatedly connects παραίνεις with διδασκαλία (“teaching”) and with the state of being “already learning” (ἄρτι μανθάνων). *Conf.* 59 too connects παραίνεις with διδασκαλία when Philo contrasts certain people who have not been taught, but act from a “self-willing, self-dictated understanding” (ἐθελουργῶ καὶ αὐτοκελεύστω διανοίᾳ), with the more normal kind of people who are led by “teaching and instruction” (διδασκαλία καὶ ὑφήγησις) and hear the divine words and sacred παραινέσεις before acting. These people are *taught* and *instructed* by those words (the ordinances of the law) understood as παραινέσεις.

Mut. 255–256 draws a similar contrast between teaching and being self-taught and states that certain things do not happen “in obedience to [κατά] the orders [ἐπιτάγματα] or [ἢ] παραινέσεις [L: “exhortations”, TE-P: “injunctions”] of instructors (ὑφηγηταί).” Apparently, the dicta of an instructor may take the form of ἐπιτάγματα, “orders” or “commands” in accordance with which (κατά)—or indeed, in obedience to which—one may then act. On the other hand, the whole passage is shot through with the language of teaching and learning (see also par. 257) and that is probably why Philo adds an *alternative* reference (“or”) to παραινέσεις, to which the proper reaction is not just one of mechanical obedience.

A further example of the combination of παραίνεις and ὑφήγησις (“suggestion”) is *Ios.* 117. There is no explicit connection with teaching here. But the combination of παραίνεις with ὑφήγησις (rightly translated in the Loeb as “advice”) and the general context of the Egyptian king commending Joseph on his παραινέσεις and ὑφηγήσεις show that Joseph is here viewed as a counsellor to the king, one who proffers advice and makes suggestions for the king’s own, subsequent consideration. He evidently does not order him around.

The same amiable character of παραίνεις and ὑφήγησις is brought out in *Virt.* 178, where Moses’ words are said to address men of wisdom who are not utterly ignorant of what is for their good “with conciliatory and amicable offers of instruction [συμβατήριοι καὶ φιλικαὶ ὑφηγήσεις], αἱ παραينوῦσιν [L: “exhorting them”, TE-P: “enjoining them”] to practise sincerity and reject vanity. . . .” The Greek

word συμβατήριος means “leading to agreement”. That—and the amiable character of the instructions—fixes their tone here. The Loeb translator chose the positive term “exhort” for παραινείν to bring this out. But as we know, “enjoin” is a better choice. The point is that there is a kind of injunction focused on specific acts in the way a law is, which does not, however, have the apodictic character of a law-command, but belongs under teaching addressed to somebody who is already positively attuned to the injunction and therefore accepts it as a piece of favorable advice. That kind of injunction is a Philonic παραίνεσις.

Προτροπή is Focused on the Addressee’s Soul (Moral Attitudes)

With the character of Philonic παραίνεσις settled we may turn to the question concerning the relationship between παραίνεσις and προτροπή (with cognates). No Philonic text addresses this question explicitly in the way our basic text spoke about the difference between πρόσταξις and παραίνεσις. Instead, we must take careful notice of certain ideas Philo regularly brings in when speaking of προτρέπειν/προτρέπεσθαι and προτροπή and consider whether they add to the meaning of texts where he speaks of both παραίνεσις and προτροπή in a manner that initially appears indiscriminate. The third basic point that I shall argue for is this: in Philo, while παραίνεσις is primarily focused on certain types of act and behavior to be done by the person addressed, προτροπή (with cognates) is focused on the addressee’s “soul” (ψυχή) and moral attitudes. προτροπή belongs squarely with the ancient “moral system” with its central focus on moral virtue (ἠθικὴ ἀρετή). When somebody (or a saying, an act, or whatever) προτρέπει or προτρέπεται, the most immediate focus is on the addressee’s moral state.

Before looking at passages that support this view, we may note that it fits the three cases in our basic text where παραίνεσις and προτροπή occur in close contact. The clearest case is one I did not actually quote above. In *Leg.* 1.97 Philo returns to the passage (*Gen* 2:16) he is aiming to exegete in the quoted paragraphs: “The charge which he [Moses] gives [ὃ δὲ παραινεῖ] is this [ταῦτά ἐστιν]: . . . [*Gen* 2:16] . . . He moves [προτρέπει] the soul [ψυχή] of the man to get benefit, not from a single tree or from a single virtue but from all the virtues.” Obviously, παραινεῖν and προτρέπειν are almost synonyms

here, but not quite: where *παραινεῖ* is about the acts *ἃ δὲ παραινεῖ, ταῦτά ἐστιν*], *προτρέπει* is about the addressee's soul and moral state.

A few lines earlier in the text (end of 1.96), Philo also employs *προτρέπειν* as a (quasi-) synonym of *παραινεῖν*. But there is no contextual material to decide for or against finding the difference in connotations that I am arguing for. The end of 1.93, which I did quote, is more helpful: The neutral man [*μέσος*] has need of *παραινέσεις*, which teaches [*διδάσκειν*] [him] to refrain [*ἀπέχειν*] from evil things, and incites [*προτρέπειν*] [him] to aim at [*ἐφίεσθαι*] things noble. The crucial word here is *ἐφίεσθαι*. It does not mean just "choose" or "go for", but "aim at" in the sense of "long for" or "desire" (see LSJ s.v.). That is precisely what an act of *προτρέπειν* is aimed to bring about. It is directed towards changing the addressees' souls so as to make them have certain wishes.

But there are even clearer arguments:

(1) Passages where *προτροπή* (with cognates) is used in conjunction with terms speaking about the soul's desires and attitudes. A good example is *Mos.* 1.251–252. In 251 Philo has described the Israelites as "infused with courage [*σπάσαντες εὐτολμίας*]," "eager in their zealotry [*ταῖς προθυμίαις ἐπειγόμενοι*]" and working on each other not to be faint-hearted [*ἀποκάμνειν*]. He continues (252): "While they thus exhorted [*προτρέποντες*] each other, they vowed to. . . ." This is the Loeb translation. But clearly, being filled with that degree of eagerness the Israelites did not just "exhort" one another. They "incited" each other, "urged" one another forward. Speaking out of that eagerness of their own souls, they addressed each others' souls.

Another example is *Mos.* 2.31, where the Loeb got it exactly right by translating *προτρέπων* "urging". Not so in *Abr.* 4, however, where Philo announces his aim to speak of "such men [like Abraham] as lived good and blameless lives, whose virtues [*ἀρετή*] stand permanently recorded in the most holy scriptures, not merely to sound their praises [*πρός . . . ἔπαινον*] but for the instruction [*ὑπὲρ τοῦ . . . προτρέψασθαι*] of the reader and as an inducement (*ἀγαγεῖν*) to him to aspire to the same (*ἐπὶ τὸν ὅμοιον ζῆλον*). The last part of this is correctly rendered by the Loeb translator, who brings out well the soul-oriented connotations of *ἀγαγεῖν* ("inducement") and *ζῆλος* ("aspire"). But *προτρέψασθαι* is not just "instruction." The connection with that other type of language shows that it also has the connotations of "urging" and "inciting."

Other passages show the same: *Virt.* 175, *Prob.* 126, 133, *Agr.* 91.

In some places the Loeb translator got it right, in others not. *Spec.* 2.61 brings out the connotations of προτρέπειν particularly clearly: “For the law προτρέπει [L: “bids us”, TE-P: “urges us to”] take the time for studying philosophy [namely, on the sabbath] and thereby *improve the soul* [βελτιοῦντας τὴν ψυχὴν] and the dominant mind.”

(2) Passages where προτροπή (with cognates) occur together with παραίνεσις (with cognates) in a manner that brings out the difference. *Spec.* 1.316 is a revealing passage. “And if a brother or son or daughter or wife or a housemate or a friend however true . . . urge us [ἐνάγειν, Loeb rightly] to a like course, προτρέπων [L: “bidding us”, TE-P: “inciting us to”] fraternize with the multitude, resort to their temples, and join in the libations and sacrifices, we must punish him as a public [δήμιος] and general [κοινός] enemy, taking little thought for the ties which bind us to him [οἰκειότης]; and we must send round a report of his proposals [παραινέσεις] to all lovers of piety. . . .” This passage may or may not be close to a situation that Philo himself knew personally. Note the changing perspective that is employed. Person A, who is bound to person B with intimate ties of family or friendship, urges B, based on his attitude towards B derived from those ties, to behave in certain ways. Thus A is full of feelings towards B. The latter, however, responds by neglecting the ties and punishing A. And when B next reports to others, C, who share his own views, about what was first described as A’s urgings, A’s “proposals” are now described as παραινέσεις. At this stage in the little story, they are seen, from B’s perspective, as no more than injunctions to a certain behavior. The soul-oriented connotations in A’s urgings have been left behind.

In *Decal.* 100 Philo speaks of the fourth commandment as “a most admirable injunction [παραίνεσις] full of power to urge us to every virtue [πρὸς πᾶσαν ἀρετὴν ἰκανωτάτη προτρέψασθαι].” The commandment is a παραίνεσις directly focused on certain acts. But it also has a certain power relative to the soul’s orientation towards virtue which turns it into a case of προτροπή.

Her. 11 and *Leg.* 1.101–102 are two other passages that show the fine-grained way in which Philo handled προτροπή and παραίνεσις, without, however, making any impression on the Loeb translator. In the latter passage, for instance, he translates προτρέπειν as “command”, when Philo states that God’s charge (παραινεῖν) in the law has the force of *urging* or *inciting* (προτρέπειν) a person towards virtue.

Against the Loeb translator, we should take it that προτροπή lies,

as it were, to the right of παραίνεσις on a line that begins from the left with πρόσταξις: πρόσταξις —> παραίνεσις —> προτροπή. . . . Before considering this in more detail, we should note the well-known fact that Philo may refer to Deuteronomy in two ways: as ἐν ταῖς παραινέσεσι(ν) (in the injunctions)—thus in *Agr.* 84 (compare *Conf.* 59) and *Spec.* 4.131—and as ἐν (τοῖς) προτρεπτικοῖς (in his urgings or incitements)—thus in *Agr.* 78, 172 (ἐν τοῖς προτρεπτικοῖς . . . Moses παραινεῖ . . .), *Fug.* 142, 170, *Mut.* 42 (Moses ἐν τοῖς προτρεπτικοῖς παραινεῖ λέγων . . .), 236, and *Virt.* 47. On the basis of what we have seen so far, this should cause no surprise. Philo is just focusing on different aspects of the statements made in Deuteronomy: on their being injunctions to perform certain behavior—then they are seen as παραινέσεις—and on their being urgings to directly influence the soul—then they are seen as προτρεπτικά.

The Two Poles of the Paraenesis Line

Let us now consider the line we have just introduced from πρόσταξις over παραίνεσις to προτροπή and onwards. The fourth basic point that I shall argue for is this: Philo has a fairly developed moral psychological idea of two opposed ways of acting, one acting just out of fear because you are ordered to do so and the other acting just because you yourself wish to do so. These two ways of acting lie at opposite poles of our line. Understanding paraenesis terminology in Philo is a matter of plotting each individual term onto the line between the two poles.

We may note to begin with that the two-pole line is already present in our basic text as a line running from the bad man (ὁ φάυλος) via the neutral man (ὁ μέσος), who is already beginning to learn (ὁ ἄρτι μανθανών), to the good and perfect man (ὁ σπουδαῖος and τέλειος). Another text elucidates the crucial step from the πρόσταξις-pole to the left in revealing ways. This is *Mos.* 2.49–51, which deserves extensive quotation. Once again I give the Loeb translation, with changes added where needed.

Now, other legislators are divided into [a] those who set out by ordering [διαταξάμενοι] what should or should not be done, and laying down penalties [τιμωρίαι] for disobedience, and [b] those [like Plato] who, thinking themselves superior, did not begin with this, but first founded and established their state as they conceived it, and then, by

framing laws, attached to it the constitution which they thought most agreeable and suitable to the form in which they had founded it. 50. But Moses, thinking that [a] the former course, namely issuing orders without words of exhortation [ἀνευ παραμυθίας προστάττειν], as though to slaves instead of free men, savoured of tyranny and despotism, as indeed it did, and that [b] the second, though aptly conceived, was evidently not entirely satisfactory in the judgement of all, took a different line in both departments. 51. [a] In his commands and prohibitions [προστάξεισι καὶ ἀπαγορεύσεσιν] he suggests [ὑποτίθεται] and παρηγορεῖ [L: “admonishes”, TE-P: “assuages”] rather than commands [κελεύει], and the very numerous and necessary instructions [better: “counsels”] [which] he essays to give [are] accompanied by forewords and after-words [μετὰ προοιμίων καὶ ἐπιλόγων τὰ πλεῖστα καὶ ἀνακαιότατα πειρώμενος ὑφηγεῖσθαι], in order to προτρέψασθαι [L: “exhort”, TE-P: “incite”] rather than to enforce. [b] Again, he considered that to begin his writings with the foundation of a man-made city. . . .

This passage almost speaks for itself. On the one hand—at the left pole—we have πρόσταξις/προστάττειν and ἀπαγόρευσις, κελεύειν and βιάσασθαι as the customary ways of tyrants and despots addressing people like slaves instead of free men. On the other hand—and moving towards the other pole—we have Moses making suggestions and assuaging his counsels with encouragement (παραμυθία), using forewords and after-words in his attempt to incite people to do the good.

What we need now is a better grasp of the right-hand pole. That will help define the area between the two poles since once the step has been taken from the left-hand pole of tyrannic orders, the ways of working on people’s minds that one finds between the two poles should be seen as *moving towards* the right-hand pole.

Abr. 16 suggests one element in that pole when it describes the man who gains the virtue of hopefulness “without being led to it by παραίνεσις [L: “exhortation”, TE-P: “injunction”] or command [δίκη τοῦ κελευσθῆναι]” but as having been “educated into it by a law . . . unwritten yet intuitively learnt [ἀγράφω μὲν νόμῳ δὲ πάλιν αὐτομαθεῖ . . . πεπαίδευται].” Thus there is a person, at the right-hand pole, who has learnt what to do *all by himself* (αὐτομαθεῖ).

Somn. 1.160–162 develops the same point. Here Philo contrasts Isaac as “a figure of knowledge gained by nature [αὐτομαθῆς φύσει περιγινόμενη . . . ἐπιστήμη], knowledge which listens to and learns from no other teacher but itself [αὐτήκοος καὶ αὐτοδίδακτος]” with Abraham as “a figure of knowledge gained by instruction [διδασκομένη]” (160). Later Isaac, considered as a special ethical “character”

(τρόπος), is described thus: “having obtained by nature [φύσει] goodness and beauty of character [τὸ καλόν], he was not one who had been improved by the admonishments of a governor [ὑπὸ νουθετούσης ἀρχῆς ἐβελτιώθη], but as the result of the gifts showered upon him from above he shewed himself good and perfect [ἀγαθὸς καὶ τέλειος] from the outset [ἐξ ἀρχῆς].”

Here Philo is speaking of νουθεσία (admonishment), to which we shall come back. The immediate point is that the right-hand pole is here described in two ways that are apparently understood by him to express the same thing. On the one hand, it is taken up by a character (τρόπος) that has acquired (περιποιεῖσθαι) τὸ καλόν (“goodness and beauty of character”, Loeb rightly) so as now to possess it. This is all about the idea of the soul’s being formed in this or the other way so as now to will certain things. The same idea is involved when the text implies that the perfect character might—but has not—come about through improvement (βελτίωσις). That too is about the soul’s being formed in a certain way so as to have certain desires. On the other hand, Philo also stresses that the perfection of the soul is one of gaining knowledge, it is cognitive and a matter of seeing. The perfect stage is one of having ἐπιστήμη, which is a term for complete and final knowledge, that of seeing correctly what should be done. Apparently, however, within Philo’s optic the two types of description come to the same thing.

That is of the greatest importance to us. For the first kind of description is the one that fits as the intended goal of προτροπή. And the second kind of description is the one that fits as that of παραίνεσις. Whereas προτροπή attempts to change the soul’s desires so as to make it will the good, παραίνεσις points out what should be done and thus speaks to the addressee’s understanding.

In the light of this we can understand the precise import of the first few lines (*Leg.* 1.92) of our basic text. Speaking of the heavenly mind Philo says that “even without urging [καὶ δίχα προτροπῆς] it possesses [ἔχει] virtue [τὴν ἀρετὴν] instinctively [αὐτομαθῶς].” He is speaking of the mind as being informed by virtue, and that is the reason why if the heavenly mind had not acquired virtue in some other way, there would have been a need for προτροπή. Now it has acquired virtue αὐτομαθῶς (“instinctively,” or as the other passage had it “intuitively”, in fact, by self-learning), and that claim belongs with the other way of understanding the state of perfection, with

which Philo immediately continues: “but the former [namely, the earthly mind], independently of instruction [διδασκαλία] could have no part in wisdom [φρόνησις].” φρόνησις is a matter of understanding as is διδασκαλία. Here Philo is therefore describing the movement towards perfection not, as he has just done, in terms of being incited and urged towards it, but of being taught. The latter way is the one adopted by παραίνεσις, which precisely teaches. We thus have the two types of exhortation—to use a non-committal word—run in parallel to describe two different ways in which a person may attempt to bring another person towards the state of perfection. And these two ways reflect and are reflected in Philo’s description of the state of perfection itself.

The Place of παραίνεσις and προτροπή on the Line

But are προτροπή and παραίνεσις just two different—even though parallel—ways in which to bring a person closer to perfection? At least, in the line from πρόσταξις to what we may now call ἀντομαθὴς φύσει περιγινόμενη . . . ἐπιστήμη or τρόπος . . . φύσει περιποιημένος τὸ κάλον, I have placed παραίνεσις closer to πρόσταξις and προτροπή closer to the right-hand pole. If this is right, the point will be that there is an asymmetry between παραίνεσις and προτροπή. παραίνεσις—with the form that we by now know it to have—might also serve the purpose of προτροπή—and hence help to inform the soul—*through* being focused on teaching what to do. Thus the ultimate aim to which προτροπή is directed—that of the total restructuring of the soul—is also the ultimate aim of παραίνεσις. By contrast, the ultimate aim of προτροπή is not *necessarily* reached through the kind of teaching that constitutes παραίνεσις. There are *other* ways of informing the soul, which do not contain an injunction to do certain specific things. And so there is an asymmetry, with παραίνεσις necessarily going through προτροπή towards the acquired form of the right-hand state of perfection—and προτροπή not necessarily employing παραίνεσις to bring a person into the same state. Let me attempt to argue this fifth basic point.

We should be looking for two things: passages where παραίνεσις appears also to serve a protreptic function and passages where προτροπή appears to be working in ways that do not require or imply παραίνεσις. If we can find both, we may take the case as settled, even if we may not have achieved an entirely satisfactory grasp of

how the complete understanding (ἐπιστήμη), which it is the task of παραίνεσις to bring about, is related to the complete restructuring of the soul that it is the task of προτροπή to generate, the state in which it has gained possession of the noble (καλόν).

(1) Passages where παραίνεσις appears also to serve a protreptic function. The end of par. 93 of our basic text at least points in this direction. Remember that Philo here claims that the μέσος “has need of παραίνεσις, which teaches [διδάσκειν] him to refrain from evil things, and incites [προτρέπειν] him to aim [ἐφίεσθαι] at things noble.” We have also already quoted *Leg.* 1.97—following just after our basic text—where Philo both maintains the special connection of προτροπή with the soul’s constitution and also allows that παραίνεσις may help bring about the aim to which προτροπή is directed.

Mos. 1.309 may be added in the same vein. In a passage (beginning back in 306) that is shot through with references to the souls of the Israelite soldiers whom Moses addresses, Philo calls Moses’ statements in his hortatory speech παραινέσεις. What this shows is that were we not able to take our earlier differentiation between προτροπή and παραίνεσις as settled, one might feel strongly inclined to conclude from the present passage that Philo used the two words indiscriminately. Now, however, we should draw a different conclusion: that παραίνεσις, which is primarily focused on what to do, may also have the additional function, *by* pointing out what should be done, of helping to reach the aim on which προτροπή is primarily focused.

Decal. 100—already quoted—makes the same point when Philo speaks of the fourth commandment as “a most admirable injunction [παγκάλη παραίνεσις] full of power [ικανωτάτη] to urge us [προτρέψασθαι] to every virtue.”

Spec. 2.18 may be quoted in support too, even though it does not speak explicitly of παραίνεσις. Of certain people, who are “puffed up by arrogance” and determined “to have nothing to do in any way with the frugal, the truly profitable mode of living”, Philo says that if anybody should “προτρέπειν them [L: “rebuke”, TE-P: “urge” *on towards* the truly profitable mode of living] in order to [ἐνεκα] rein in [ἀναχαιτίσαι] the unruliness of their desires, they regard the admonition [νουθεσία] as an insult [ὕβρις], and . . . disregard their correctors [ἀλογόυσι τῶν σωφρονιστῶν] and hold the admirable and also highly valuable instructions [ὑφήγησεις] of wisdom [φρόνησις] a matter for laughter and mockery.” ὑφήγησις is synonymous with παραίνεσις, and as we shall see, νουθεσία and σωφρονισμός share with παραίνεσις the character of being injunctions pointing to specific

things to be done (or in this case: not to be done). But the reason why νοουθεσία, σωφρονισμός and ὑφηγήσεις may also be said to serve to προτρέπειν is that they are now also being seen as working on the person's desires, contributing to reining in their unruliness. That is the specific task of προτροπή.

Let us now turn to the other side of our agenda:

(2) Passages indicating that προτροπή need not always work through the giving of specific injunctions. A striking text is the famous introduction to *Abr.* (2ff.). Philo announces that before he turns to discussing the enacted laws, he will examine the originals [ἀρχέτυποι] of those copies, namely, "such *men* [ἄνδρες] as lived good and blameless lives, whose virtues stand permanently recorded in the most holy scriptures" (4). They were themselves "ensouled, reasoning laws" and the enacted laws are nothing but "memorials [ὑπομνήματα]" of their "life [βίος]," preserving to a later generation "their actual deeds and words [ἔργα καὶ λόγοι]" (5). In themselves, they were "not scholars or pupils of others, nor did they learn [ἀναδιδασχθέντες] under teachers [διδάσκαλοι]" what was right to do and say (πράττειν καὶ λέγειν). Being αὐτήκοοι and αὐτομαθεῖς, they "listened to no voice or instruction but their own" (6).

There are two sides to this account. One is that the virtuous ancients are described as having done and said what later generations would then be taught by the enacted laws to do and say. The other is that it is their whole "life"—not just their deeds and words—that is immemorialized in the enacted laws. Indeed, it is their virtues and the fact of their having lived good and blameless lives that have been recorded in scripture. Thus they are "archetypes" of the enacted laws not just for what they did and said, but in a more comprehensive and unified manner for what they were. It is this feature, I suggest, the ensouled and reasoning character of their law-likeness, which turns them into "archetypes" in the sense of "models".

So far this might be no more than a guess. But it is rendered certain by a point Philo makes at the end of par. 4. "These [the archetypal laws] are such men as lived good and blameless lives, whose virtues stand permanently recorded in the most holy scriptures, not merely to sound their praises [πρός . . . ἑπαινόν] but for the instruction [ΝΟ!] of the reader [ὑπὲρ τοῦ τοὺς ἐντυγχάνοντας προτρέψασθαι] and as an inducement to him to aspire to the same [ἐπὶ τὸν ὅμοιον ζῆλον ἀγαγεῖν]; 5. for in these men we have laws endowed with life and reason . . ." According to this, Moses told of

the lives of the virtuous ancients, including Abraham, in order *in that way*, which for obvious reasons could not consist in listing παραίνεσεις of an as yet non-existing enacted law, to *urge* or *incite* people to lead the same good and blameless lives. The account of the virtuous ancients does not serve as paraenetic “instruction”, as the Loeb translator has it, but precisely as προτροπή working specifically and to the exact contrary in a manner that does not employ paraenetic instruction.

Another passage may be mentioned briefly. In *Mos.* 2.183 Philo has Moses use the nut—with its bitter, solid and hard shell surrounding the edible fruit—as a parable (σύμβολον) of the training or exercising soul (ἀσκητική ψυχή), thinking that one may use the parable “to encourage [προτρέπειν] that soul to virtue”. First there must be toil (πόνος), which is “bitter and stiff and hard”—“yet from it springs goodness”. Clearly, using a parable like this for protreptic purposes does not involve any παραίνεσις.

Further instances of προτροπή that does not employ παραίνεσις are *Spec.* 3.24 and *Prob.* 126 and 132, which readers may try to figure out for themselves.

The Place of νουθεσία/σωφρονισμός on the Line

We may conclude that παραίνεσις and προτροπή are asymmetrically related in the way I suggested. Our line therefore looks like this: πρόσταξις/ἀπαγόρευσις —> παραίνεσις —> προτροπή —> the state of full possession of καλόν (“virtue”) and ἐπιστήμη (“knowledge”). We still need to look at the third member of our initial triad: παρακαλεῖν/παρακλήσις. Before doing this, we should study another pair of paraenetic terms that plays a large role in the Philonic corpus and is closely related to his use of παραινεῖν. I have in mind the two terms νουθετεῖν (and νουθεσία and νουθετητής) and σωφρονίζειν (and σωφρονισμός and σωφρονιστής).

These two terms, which very often turn up in conjunction with one another, to some extent constitute a sort of flipside of παραινεῖν. A passage in *Virt.* (75) might seem to indicate otherwise, when Philo speaks of “confrontations [ἐλέγχοι] for past sins,” “admonitions [νουθεσίαι] and corrections [σωφρονισμοί] for the present time,” and “injunctions [παραινέσεις] for the future” (my translations). However, this is most likely only a slightly specious way of drawing another distinction

between *νουθεσία* and *σωφρονισμοί* on the one hand and *παραινέσεις* on the other—the point about *ἔλεγχαι* seems well enough taken—namely, that the former are (negative) injunctions *not* to do (or continue doing) something wrong (“in the present”)—lest one suffer something bad in recompense—and the latter are positive injunctions actually to do something (“in the future”). We shall also see, however, that the reference to the risk of bad consequences connects *νουθεσία* and *σωφρονισμός* more closely with the extreme left-hand pole of our line than is the case for *παραίνεσις*. On the one hand, then, the two terms do constitute a sort of flipside of *παραίνεσις*. On the other hand, they are also more closely connected with the left-hand pole. This understanding of *νουθεσία*/*σωφρονισμός* is the sixth basic point that needs argument.

In *Conf.* 46—referred to above—Philo mentions *παραινεῖν* alongside with *νουθετεῖν* and *σωφρονίζειν* (together with *κακίζειν*, “abuse, reproach” in LSJ). In *Decal.* 87—also quoted previously—he states that *ἔλεγχος* as judge *διδάσκει* (teaches), *νουθετεῖ* (“admonishes”) and *παραινεῖ*. In *Spec.* 2.18—also quoted previously—he mentions *νουθεσία* (“admonition”) and *σωφρονισταί* (“correctors”) alongside with the *ὑφηγήσεις* (“instructions”) of wisdom (*φρόνησις*), which are synonymous with *παραινέσεις*. In one respect, then, *νουθεσία* and *σωφρονισμοί* parallel *παραινέσεις* completely. In the paraenesis line we might place them just under *παραινέσεις*.

As such, of course, they only constitute a negative counterpart to the positive *παραινέσεις*. This comes out again and again in the constant combination of *νουθετεῖν* with fear (*φόβος*). A few examples: *Deus* 64. “. . . ill-disciplined and foolish slaves receive profit from a master who frightens them, for they fear his threats [*ἀπειλαί*] and menaces [*ἐπανατάσεις*] and thus *involuntarily* [*ἄκοντες*] are schooled [*νουθετοῦνται*] *by fear* [*φόβος*] . . . if they cannot be brought to wisdom [*σωφρονίζεσθαι*] *by truth*.” *Ebr.* 29. “Surely it were just that such a one as he should . . . be visited with complete destruction, to admonish [*πρὸς νουθεσίαν*] and bring to their senses [*σωφρονισμόν*] those [namely, certain others] who can be saved.” *νουθεσία*, then, is admonition *against* doing something, with a distinct element of warning to it. And *σωφρονισμός* is bringing people to their senses on the dark background that they otherwise risk trouble.

The two quoted passages show one more point about *νουθεσία* and *σωφρονισμός*. In the first one, the two terms are used in connection with people who cannot be taught. They can be influenced,

through threats which generate fear in them, but no genuine appeal can be made to their understanding. The reason is that they are “fools” (ἄφρονες). (Compare also *Deus* 52 and 68; *Mos.* 1.95, 2.172, etc.) These people therefore in fact belong at the extreme left-hand point of our line, where there is only πρόσταξις/ἀπαγόρευσις. Here they lie next to another group, namely, those to whom the law’s ordinances only state the punishment they may expect from not obeying them. For instance, in *Decal.* 174 Philo says that there are “many ordinances [πολλά . . . διατέτακται]” that come under the head of the tenth commandment “for the admonition [νουθεσία] of those who are capable of reformation [they are ἐπ’ ἀνθρώπων ἐνδεχόμενοι] and the punishment [κολασία] of the rebellious who have made a life-long surrender to passion.” (For the same dual idea see, e.g., *Praem.* 149.) At the extreme left-hand pole, therefore, we have two groups of people, both of which constitute the target of the law’s προσταξεις and ἀπαγορεύσεις. The people in the one group are entirely beyond the pale. They cannot be influenced in any way for the better and will just be punished. The people in the other group are however capable of reformation, though only unwillingly and through fear. They therefore constitute one target for the law’s ordinances viewed as νουθεσία. In fact, as the second quoted passage makes clear, they may be warned and “saved” precisely through seeing the punishment that falls upon the people of the other group.

This severe form of admonition, which removes admonition from being just the flipside of παραίνεσις, is quite extensively referred to by Philo: *Mos.* 2.172, *Mut.* 22–23, *Spec.* 2.232, 2.241, 4.150, and *Virt.* 94. But although he is keen on stressing the need for this fear-based kind of νουθεσία which works on what he in one place (*Det.* 3) calls “the irrational powers in the soul” (αἱ ἐν ψυχῇ δυνάμεις ἄλογοι), he also does use the term in connection with people who have left behind the extreme left-hand pole of our line and are now to be found somewhere on the road towards the other pole. This brings us back to νουθεσία as a flipside of παραίνεσις. Among a range of passages that belong here in one way or another (*Opif.* 128, *Gig.* 46, *Mos.* 1.328 in relation to 321, *Flacc.* 14 and 15, and *Legat.* 41, 43, 53, and 64) we may take special notice—because of its possibly autobiographical reference—of *Spec.* 2.19: “A short time ago a man of considerable property who had found a loose and dissipated style of living to his taste, was in the presence of an elderly person, a relation or old family friend, I believe [was it Philo himself?], who was

reproving him [νουθετεῖν] and advising him [παρακαλεῖν, better: “exhorting” him] to make a change and conduct himself with more strictness and seriousness. The other strongly resented this παραίνεις [L: “reproof”, TE-P: “injunction”] and countered the challenge by . . .” Here νουθεσία is shortly afterwards taken up by παραίνεις. And clearly, though the elderly person (Philo?) is admonishing the other one (his nephew, Tiberius?), he is not scaring him into submission.

We should conclude that νουθεσία and σωφρονισμός may in one form be understood as lying somewhere between the two poles of our line, in fact as the negative flipside of positive παραίνεις. That is when they operate gently and quietly and address themselves to the understanding of an addressee who is “already learning”. In another, more intransigent form, they belong at the left-hand pole. Here their appeal is to the addressees’ sense of fear in an attempt to make them curb the irrational powers of their souls. Still, the addressees are viewed as capable of reform and so, in spite of the important gap between belonging at the left-hand pole and having moved towards an understanding of what will eventually find its full flowering at the right-hand pole, there is an overlap between the two types of νουθεσία/σωφρονισμός which to some extent bridges the gap. After all, in order to have a sense of fear at all, even those at the left-hand pole do need to have some kind of understanding.

The Place of παράκλησις on the Line

Finally, there is παρακαλεῖν and παράκλησις. What is most striking about Philo’s use of these terms is that they do not have any of those specific connotations we have noticed in προστάττειν/ἀπαγορεύειν, νουθετεῖν/σωφρονίζειν, παραινεῖν, and προτρέπειν. Παρακαλεῖν just means “exhort” or “appeal” in the broadest and vaguest sense of that term so as to cover any kind of address between the two poles. (Even “bid” may be an appropriate translation when it is taken to mean no more than “ask”.) To exhort is to address somebody in order to make the person addressed do/not do or be/not be something. This is the seventh basic point that we need to argue for. It is interesting to notice, however, that παρακαλεῖν (with cognates) does not occur very often in the Philonic corpus. That may reflect its generality. Apparently, Philo was keen on some degree of precision in his use of language in this whole area.

We should give some references that support the view of a rather non-specific use of the term in Philo. In *Opif.* 157 Philo refers to certain “mythical fictions [μύθου πλάσματα]” as “bidding us [παρακαλοῦντα]” resort to allegorical interpretation. They hardly do more than “ask for” it. In *Ebr.* 193 he refers to certain considerations by which we are “warned against giving over-ready credence to uncertainties”: they παρακαλεῖ us not to do this. Do they do more than “tell us” not to do it?

In a number of passages the Loeb translator renders παρακαλεῖν quite unspecifically. He seems right. Here belong passages like the following, which the reader may wish to consult: *Post.* 138, *Conf.* 83, *Somn.* 2.106, *Mos.* 1.139, 233, 266, and 268, *Legat.* 30. In these passages the Loeb translator renders παρακαλεῖν (and cognates) as “bid”, “exhort” and the like. There is no problem with this, but in most places a modern “ask” would do just as well.

For argumentative purposes we should also consider a number of passages for which the Loeb translator chose somewhat stronger and more specific renderings. There are primarily two: “urge” and “beg”. Was he right here too? Do these passages require—or even “call for” or “invite” (!)—such renderings?

First some cases of “urge”. In two passages, *Sobr.* 40 and *Conf.* 110–111, one might in fact find material to support the stronger rendering. But the opposite view may also be argued. In two other passages, *Prob.* 94 and *Legat.* 52, the strong rendering seems a clear case of over-interpretation. Thus apart from the two other passages there is no real justification for rendering παρακαλεῖν as “urge”, as if it were synonymous with προτρέπειν. (Another relevant passage, *Spec.* 2.252, even speaks against it, as rightly rendered by the Loeb translator.)

Next some cases of “beg”. The Loeb rendering in *Ios.* 173 is probably only a mistake. *Mos.* 1.285 definitely is an over-interpretation. *Mos.* 1.83 appears to be the same, as one may see from comparison with *Prob.* 64, where the Loeb translator rightly renders παρακαλεῖν by “exhort”.

We should conclude that no text unequivocally forces us to give any more specific meaning to παρακαλεῖν than “exhort”, “appeal”, “ask”. It may therefore serve as an umbrella term for the other terms with their more specific connotations.

Conclusion

This ends our investigation. As already noted at the beginning, a range of issues remain. One has turned out to be especially urgent: Did Philo have a carefully worked out theory of the psychology of action underlying the differences we have been able to articulate, in particular between νουθετεῖν, παραινεῖν, and προτρέπειν—to begin from the left-hand pole of our line—and also in his various accounts of the state of being at the right-hand pole?

Here, however, we may be content if we have managed to make the case that for all their quality the Loeb translations of Philo are much too casual in their renderings of the terms we have been investigating. Philo himself is far more precise in plotting in the various terms on a single line:

πρόταξις/ἀπαγόρευσις → παραίνεσις → προτροπή → ἐπιστήμη/ἠθικὴ ἀρετή
 νουθεσία/σωφρονισμός
 π α ρ ά κ λ η σ ι ς

COMMON WORDS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT AND PHILO: SOME RESULTS FROM A COMPLETE VOCABULARY COMPARISON

Kåre Fuglseth

1. *Introduction*

Until recently, complete vocabulary comparisons of the New Testament with contemporary literature have not been possible. In a time when ancient Greek texts are becoming digitised there are certainly many new possibilities both for complex searches and complex vocabulary comparisons. In this article I shall present some results of a complete computer-generated comparison of the New Testament words with the words in the writings of Philo of Alexandria. I have undertaken a statistical enumeration and registration of common words in the New Testament and the writings of Philo and compared the results with a similar analysis of the vocabulary relationship between Philo and the Letter to the Hebrews alone. Apart from presenting common themes of the two text corpora the results of the comparison strengthen theories that maintain that there are unique ties between some of the New Testament writings and Philo, and that the connection to the Letter to the Hebrews is particularly significant.

It is an honour for me as one of Peder Borgen's former students to contribute to this *Festschrift*. I worked with Peder on several projects, but particularly on the Norwegian Philo Concordance Project together with Roald Skarsten at the University of Bergen. The project resulted in a new Philo concordance in a machine-readable form, a printed KWIC-concordance and a printed index.¹ While working on this Philo concordance project the editors sometimes also discussed how scholarship could benefit from our tagged electronic database of Philo words. I want to use this opportunity to present an application of our Philo database in relation to biblical studies. Professor

¹ P. Borgen, K. Fuglseth and R. Skarsten, *The Philo Index. A Complete Greek Word Index to the Writings of Philo of Alexandria* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000). KWIC = Key Word In Context.

Borgen is a scholar who has, among many research interests, also focused on the relationship between the writings of the New Testament and Philo of Alexandria. Particularly for that reason it is appropriate to present some results from a *complete* vocabulary comparison between these writings, a comparison that I have undertaken with the aid of electronic data processing on the basis of the words compiled during our concordance project.

Much of this research is also possible without the help of electronic tools, but modern computers facilitate the task enormously, and sometime in the future when perhaps all ancient Greek texts are tagged in digital form and with the same code-system, scholars will possess a working instrument that may not only save years of study but open the field for even new kinds of research. Our concordance project has hopefully contributed to this promising prospects of biblical and ancient scholarship.²

2. *The Databases*

The quality of an automatic computer-generated comparison will never be better than its base; it is dependent on the original texts, the digitising of these texts, the tagging, as well as the nature of the computer-programs used for the automatic comparison, to name only the essentials.

The database of the Philo Concordance Project now consists of 437,433 lines or posts, words or tokens (i.e. occurrences or text-forms) with 13,607 different lemmas (the chosen main entry form, dictionary form or vocabulary word).³ The New Testament database that we gathered consists of 138,018 tokens with 5426 lemmas.⁴

² A good overview of similar, ongoing and past projects are found in the proceedings from the AIBI (Association Internationale de Bible et Informatique) conferences *Bible et informatique*, published in 1986, 1989, 1992, 1995 and 1998.

³ Comparable to what Morgenthaler calls "Wortschatz" (treasure of words), in R. Morgenthaler, *Statistik der neutestamentlichen Wortschatzes* (Zürich: Gotthelf, 1958).

⁴ Morgenthaler, *Statistik der neutestamentlichen Wortschatzes* 19, operates with 5436 words, or as he writes "rund 5400 Vokabeln" and 137,328 text-forms (pp. 21; 164). The slightly different numbers compared to my numbers are due to different text bases. For a complete computer-generated overview of the New Testament words, see H. Bachmann and W. A. Slaby, *Computer-Konkordanz zum Novum Testamentum Graece* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1980) and also in idem, *Concordance to the Novum Testamentum Graece, Third Edition* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1987). A Septuagint (LXX) database was also established during the previous Norwegian Philo concordance project period

The texts are collected from several sources. On the initiative of Peder Borgen and Roald Skarsten (when both were at the University of Bergen), a machine-readable text of Philo's writings was produced in the beginning of the 1970s, based on the text in the Cohn-Wendland edition of Philo's writing.⁵ A computer program for making a KWIC-concordance was written by Professor Skarsten. In the printout of this concordance that was produced in 1974, the words were typed with Greek letters which, at that time, was not as customary and simple as today. Since the list was organised mechanically on the basis of the Greek alphabetic order of the text-forms only, it was quite inconvenient, particularly for combined multiple searches. Two copies were printed, printouts that impressively covered several meters on the shelves in Professor Borgen's combined library and office at the University of Trondheim at the time when I started my studies there in the beginning of the 1980s. Some entire writings were lemmatised and parsed (i.e. lexicographically and grammatically tagged) by Skarsten, and in the next period of our project new computer programs were developed and all the words lemmatised and parsed by the editors. The texts of *Hypothetica*, *De Providentia* and shorter Greek fragments were later added and tagged.⁶

The New Testament text applied for this comparison with Philo's writings is primarily based on the main text of the third edition of the United Bible Societies' (UBS) Greek New Testament.⁷ It has

in the 1990s, but not made operative for the kind of comparison that was undertaken with the New Testament and Philo. The Septuagint database consists of 616,034 posts (i.e. with the Apocrypha), in accordance with A. Rahlfs, *Septuaginta* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1979).

⁵ L. Cohn, P. Wendland, S. Reiter, *Philonis Alexandrini opera quae supersunt* (Berlin: Reimer, 1896–1915).

⁶ *Hypothetica* and *De Providentia* were digitised on the basis of volume 9 in the Philo edition by F. H. Colson, *Philo. The Embassy to Gaius* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1962) in the LCL-series. The Greek fragments were based on F. Petit, *Philon. Quaestiones in Genesim et in Exodum fragmenta graeca. Introduction, texte critique et notes* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1978). These texts were copied from the TLG CD-ROM with permission (TLG = Thesaurus Linguae Graecae, a project by the University of California, Irvine). Other Greek fragments were added manually, i.e. from J. Paramelle, *Philo of Alexandria, Quaestiones in Genesim. Liber 2, 1–7. Polyglot* (Genève: P. Cramer, 1984). For more details, cf. also the introduction to Borgen, Fuglseth and Skarsten, *The Philo Index*.

⁷ K. Aland, M. Black, C. M. Martini *et al.*, *The Greek New Testament*, 3rd ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft and United Bible Societies, 1975). The third edition by the United Bible Societies is identical with the twenty-sixth edition of the *Novum Testamentum Graece* in E. Nestle, E. Nestle, K. Aland *et al.*, *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 26. Auflage (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft and United Bible Societies, 1979).

been corrected and updated in accordance with the fourth edition.⁸ The words in the textual apparatus are omitted but some alternative texts are included; the dubious text of John 7:53–8:11 and the two secondary endings of Mark. To avoid problems related to the lack of a standard font system of Greek types, a standard representation of Greek by Latin capital letters has been developed with the BETA-code also applied in the TLG-project, a system that is also applied in the New Testament text as demonstrated above. The database in the Norwegian Philo Concordance Project uses Packard's morphological system also applied in the CCAT-texts. Having the Philo texts and the New Testament texts in the same format facilitated the automatic comparison enormously.

To give an idea of what the initial compared texts look like in a the original database, I have include two samples of each text. Each line represents the information given in each entry or "post".⁹

List 1: Samples of the database text structure

Sample of the Philo lemmatised text with grammatical tags (*Opif.* 1):¹⁰

- 1 *Opif.* 1 TW=N RA-GPM O(
- 2 *Opif.* 1 A)/LLWN RD-GPM A)/LLOS
- 3 *Opif.* 1 NOMOQETW=N N1MGPM NOMOQE/THS
- 4 *Opif.* 1 OI(RA-NPM O(
- 5 *Opif.* 1 ME\N X ME/N

⁸ K. Aland, M. Black, J. Karavidopoulos *et al.*, *The Greek New Testament*, 4th ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft and United Bible Societies, 1993), cf. E. Nestle, E. Nestle, K. Aland *et al.*, *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 27 Auflage (Stuttgart, 1993). The text was in the first place copied from a version published by Linguist's Software in an attempt to compare and control our tagging of Philo's words. Copyright is held by the United Bible Societies (UBS). I have tried to track the digital history of the text and found that the UBS Greek New Testament database was derived, in part, from the machine-readable text created by TLG. This text was originally copied from a digital version of B. Friberg and T. Friberg, *Analytical Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981). It was again originally licensed from the CCAT (The Center for Computer Analysis of Texts) at the University of Pennsylvania. J. K. Tauber has collected a list of hundreds of errors concerning the lemmatising of the CCAT text and he has re-distributed the text via Internet (cf. <http://www.entmp.org>, date 12.19.2001).

⁹ The transformation of Greek types to Latin capital types in the BETA-code is not too important in this connection. It follows a quite intuitive line: Alpha is A, beta is B, gamma is G, delta is D etc., but eta is H, theta is Q, chi is C, omega is W, etc. Note that each diacritic sign (such as the accents ´ ˘ ˆ i. e. / \ =) is placed behind the letter to which it belongs. * denotes a proper name.

¹⁰ The information is given in the following order: 1) The number of the word in the whole corpus, 2) reference with paragraph, 3) token, 4) parse and 5) lemma.

- 6 Opif. 1 A)KALLW/PISTA A—APN? A)KALLW/PISTOS
 7 Opif. 1 KAI\ C? KAI/
 8 Opif. 1 GUMNA\ A1—APN? GUMNO/S
 9 Opif. 1 TA\ RA—APN? O(
 10 Opif. 1 NOMISQE/NTA VS—APPASN? NOMI/ZW

Sample of the New Testament lemmatised text with grammatical tags (Matt 1:1–2a):¹¹

- 1 010101 BI/BLOS N——NSF- BI/BLOS
 2 010101 GENE/SEWS N——GSF- GE/NESIS
 3 010101 *I)HSOU= N——GSM- *I)HSOU=S
 4 010101 *XRISTOU= N——GSM- *XRISTO/S
 5 010101 UI(OU= N——GSM- UI(O/S
 6 010101 *DAUI\ D N——GSM- *DAUI/D
 7 010101 UI(OU= N——GSM- UI(O/S
 8 010101 *A)BRAA/M N——GSM- *A)BRAA/M
 9 010102 *A)BRAA\M N——NSM- *A)BRAA/M
 10 010102 E)GE/NNHSEN V-3AAI-S——GENNA/W

Texts that are lemmatised and parsed in this way allow sophisticated and grammatical searches that would, in fact, be impossible with the printed biblical and Philonic texts alone. However, there are several problems connected both to the lemmatising and the grammatical tagging that may disturb the results.

A major challenge in comparing the manuscripts of Philo of Alexandria, the Septuagint and the New Testament is the great variation of the New Testament manuscripts. Since its early days, there have been a multitude of versions and translations of the New Testament, often with texts that may be interpreted in conflicting with the other versions. Apart from orthographic errors that may be made when digitising the texts, there may also be classification errors of lemmas, misunderstood grammatical function and subsequently wrong grammatical tags; there may also be logical errors in the computer programming codes, i.e. errors not discovered by the compiler.¹² The Greek lemmatising and grammatical tagging are often unsure on the basis of morphology alone and must be compared to the function

¹¹ The information given is: 1) The number of the word in the whole corpus, 2) reference: “010101” refers to the number of this writing in the entire corpus, chapter and verse, i.e. “Mt 1:1”, 3) token, 4) parse, and 5) lemma.

¹² A compiler is the program that translates the “natural language” of the computer program to machine-readable codes while at the same time checking the program according to the standards rules of the digital computer technique.

of the word in context. There will always be a tension between a purely morphological analysis based upon word forms and a more functional analysis based on the interaction of the word with other words in the larger group of words ("sentence"). Grammatical tagging schemes range along a spectrum from formal (morphological) to functional classifications. No scheme of classifying Greek words is purely formal or purely functional, since the function of a word is determined both by its morphology and its relation to the context. A morphologically based system may be less subjective than a functional one, but even the strictest formal classification method must classify certain words by function in context, since the morphology of these words is inconclusive and subject to scholarly debate.

While working on the Philo concordance database we decided to base the tagging on morphological criteria to save time. Philo's Greek constructions are often complicated and the references with ambiguous morphological criteria are not always possible to determine with certainty, e.g., the question of the neuter or masculine plural of nouns, adjectives and participles.¹³ We handled the ambiguous classifications by a particular flagging (i.e. a question mark) connected to the parse tag of the word in the electronic database. Thus, conclusions from the comparison of words between these two Greek corpora must be drawn cautiously, particularly when it comes to the mentioned classes of words and their tags. In the list below I have only included the main word classes (nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, particles etc.) which reduces the possible range of detailed results, but makes the results presented more certain as far as the grammatical classifications are concerned.

Printed indices have been and will still be handy and useful instruments in studies of large text corpora, but can never really compete with a computerised edition, a fact that was clearly demonstrated when we transferred the Philo concordance database to a small printed index. The computer allowed us to easily experiment with and eventually also present the Philo Index in a complete and reader-friendly way; the index turned out to have several advantages compared to earlier published indices of the Philonic vocabulary.¹⁴ The index

¹³ Cf. the New Testament example concerning the question of the gender of *πονήρ* in Matt 6:13.

¹⁴ Borgen, Fuglseth and Skarsten, *The Philo Index*; G. Mayer, *Index Philoneus* (Berlin

is almost complete in that it includes all main Greek fragments. Secondly, it is complete in that it presents all words except the words with high frequency such as $\delta\acute{\epsilon}$ (11,509 occurrences), $\kappa\alpha\acute{\iota}$ (27,513 occurrences) and $\acute{o}$ (or definite article: 58,225 occurrences). These three words represent almost 100,000 occurrences and about 22 per cent of the total number of words in Philo, so that studies of style connected to these words should be restricted to digital investigations. Third, the index uses abbreviations of Philo's writings instead of coded numbers. However, the printed index cannot compete with the digitised database when it comes to combining numerous fast search possibilities of tags and also words with an alternative orthography.

Scholars may perform similar combined searches with a New Testament text; a combination of a digitised New Testament text and the Philo text creates unique and almost unlimited possibilities. To compare words in two printed lemmatised indices is time consuming and in the case of a combined search of the New Testament and the writings of Philo a complete comparison would take years.¹⁵

3. *Possible Ways of Applications of the Philo Concordance Database*

The interest of New Testament scholars in non-biblical writings reflects the scholarly consensus that these texts have an particular explanatory value for the historical understanding of the New Testament.¹⁶ As one of the only Jewish contemporaries of Jesus and Paul from which we have writings, Philo is initially of special interest, although today he seems to be in the shadow of the writings of Josephus and, even more, of the almost completely published Dead Sea Scrolls. Philo becomes more interesting for New Testament scholars when one realises that he in many ways represents common ideas and social practices of the Alexandrian Jews.¹⁷ Conclusions pointing

and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1974) and Leisegang in the index volumes (volume VII, part 1 and 2) of Cohn, Wendland, and Reiter, *Philonis Alexandrini opera*.

¹⁵ See also the discussion in D. T. Runia, "How to Search Philo", *SPhilo* 2 (1990) 106–139.

¹⁶ Cf. M. Hengel, "Aufgaben der Neutestamentlichen Wissenschaft," *NTS* (1994) 321–57. Hengel points to the need of intensive studies of Philo and other Jewish-Hellenistic writings (p. 344), as well as for the necessity for New Testament scholars to have at least one foot outside the New Testament (p. 355). Since koiné Greek is a historical language, even a pure literary procedure presupposes historical inquiry.

¹⁷ It is without doubt one of Borger's main achievements to have demonstrated

towards a direct influence between the New Testament and Philo are, however, almost completely lacking despite the vast influence of Philo on the Church Fathers. While there are certainly common themes and ideas, the differences are also vast.¹⁸ Quantitative methods have been used for some time now to demonstrate relationships between two ancient Greek writings, but as far as I know, not between the New Testament and Philo for the purpose of a possible direct influence.

Stylometric studies of ancient and koiné Greek first started in the mid-nineteenth century, and the authenticity and homogeneity of all New Testament writings have been scrutinised in this way to prove or disprove the authorship of a writing or its distribution of literary sources.¹⁹ W. C. Wake introduced his presentation of a statistical analysis of Pauline authorship of Pauline Epistles by stating that for a long time scholars had applied numbers to questions of style in

that Philo, although an elitist, presents common Jewish ideas, cf. for instance P. Borgen, *Bread from Heaven. An Exegetical Study of the Concept of Manna in the Gospel of John and the Writings of Philo* (Leiden: Brill, 1965) and P. Borgen, *Philo of Alexandria. An Exegete for His Time* (Leiden: Brill, 1997).

¹⁸ Philo is often referred to as a point of comparison to the New Testament. D. T. Runia, *Philo in Early Christian Literature. A Survey* (Assen: van Gorcum, 1993) 63ff., is sceptical to the importance of parallels between the two writings. In an assessment of the general relationship between Philo and the New Testament Runia distinguishes between 1. a common background, 2. background for Paul, 3. for the Letter to the Hebrews and 4. for the Gospel of John. The New Testament writings emerged from what Runia prefers to call "Greek-speaking Judaism" rather than "Hellenistic Judaism" since Philo's Judaism has a particular characterisation (p. 66). P. Borgen, *Bread from Heaven* speaks of a "parallel phenomenon" and argues that Philo may exemplify Jewish traditions and thought-categories that are interpreted along different lines by Philo and John, a fact that would also include other New Testament writings as well, cf. particularly P. Borgen "The Gospel of John and Hellenism. Some Observations," *Exploring the Gospel of John*, eds. A. Culpepper and C. Black (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1996) 99. T. Seland, "The 'Common Priesthood' of Philo and 1 Peter. A Philonic Reading of 1 Peter 2.5,9," *JNT* (1995) reads 1 Peter as by a reader well versed in Philo's writings, a procedure that is in accordance with the impression of a general correspondence rather than direct relationship between the authors in question. Cf. the correspondence between Philo and Paul that was noticed by H. Chadwick, "St. Paul and Philo of Alexandria" *BjRL* 48 (1966) 286–307. See also the notes on the relationship between Philo and the Letter to the Hebrews below.

¹⁹ Cf. W. C. Wake, "The Authenticity of the Pauline Epistles. A Contribution from Statistical Analysis", *HibJ* (1948); *idem*, "Sentence Length Distributions of Greek Authors", *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society of London* 120 (1957) 331–46; C. B. Williams, *Style and Vocabulary: Numerical Studies* (London: Griffin, 1970); A. Q. Morton, *Literary Detection. How to Prove Authorship and Fraud in Literature and Documents* (New York: Bowker, 1978); A. Q. Morton and A. D. Winspear, eds. *It's Greek to the Computer* (Montreal: Harvest House, 1971).

recording the number of times a particular word or expression was used by an author.²⁰ G. U. Yule, W. C. Wake, A. Q. Morton and other scholars who followed in their foot-steps, extended the use of quantitative data in search for indications for a certain author. These attempts were too optimistic. Despite their quantitative “indisputable” character, the results were not unequivocal and therefore did not end the discussions concerning the authorship of dubious Pauline Letters. Quantitative investigations must naturally be followed up by a more qualitative procedure.

Roald Skarsten demonstrated the usefulness of the Philo concordance database in an investigation of the authorship of *De aeternitate mundi* (*Aet.*).²¹ Skarsten combined the methods explained above when he studied the authorship of *Aet.* by comparing the style in this writing with the style in other writings of Philo that are not direct biblical commentaries. He found that *Aet.* could *not* have been written by Philo, particularly because the author of *Aet.* uses the technique of interlacing in a distinctive way. Skarsten presents a stylometric analysis of these writings (pp. 95–119) concerning sentence length, the particle δέ, the distribution of καί and the distribution of word classes, but concentrates particularly on the effect of interlacing in *Aet.* and compares it to *De Opificio Mundi* (*Opif.*). Interlacing (συμπλοκή) is a hyperbaton (the phenomenon of deliberate separation of collocations) of a special kind: one hyperbaton gives rise to another; two logically connected but spatially separated words in turn divide the word or expression, which divides them from its natural fellows produces a special effect (pp. 88–94). He found that this phenomenon of interlacing is characteristic for the author of *Aet.* but not for the author of *Opif.* Skarsten uses this fact to conclude, together with arguments concerning the notion of God, cosmology, geographical comments like the one *Aet.* 62 and with a combination of names of plants and their normal geographical locations, that *De aeternitate mundi* is probably *not* Philonic.²²

²⁰ Wake, “The Authenticity of the Pauline Epistles” 50. Morton, *Literary Detection*, 165–183. Cf. A. Q. Morton, *The Gatherings of the Gospels. From Papyrus to Printout* (Lewiston, New York: Edwin Mellen, 1997).

²¹ R. Skarsten, *Forfatterproblemet ved De Aeternitate Mundi i Corpus Philonicum* (Bergen: University of Bergen, 1987).

²² Skarsten, *Forfatterproblemet*, contra, among others, earlier Philo scholars such as Cumont and Leisegang, but also contra D. T. Runia, “Philo’s *De aeternitate mundi*: The Problem of Its Interpretation” *VC* 35 (1981) 105–51.

My intention with an automatic comparison of New Testament words and Philo's words is not to demonstrate homogeneity or authenticity of one part of the Philonic corpus or of the New Testament in relation to another. My intention is to take a first step towards further thematic (theological, ideological, social, etc.) studies of the high frequency words. What I have attempted is to trace possible thematic correspondence that may help us to understand the New Testament historically. There are certainly also other ways of detecting or tracing common themes in the New Testament and Philo. Lists of biblical references and other references in indices like the one by Leisegang or J. W. Earp in the LCL series are helpful and the bibliographies are useful.²³ Common words and parts of words have been noticed by several scholars and a necessary start, of course, is a thorough reading and knowledge of biblical writings and Philo's writings.²⁴ Feld mentions for instance the parallel constructions with πολυ- as an example of the many striking parallels between Philo and the letter to the Hebrews, cf. the beginning of Hebrews and Philo in *Ebr.* 170, *Mos.* 1:117, *Somn.* 1:134, *Decal.* 83, *Abr.* 209.²⁵ In our Philo concordance database there are 376 occurrences of words that start with πολυ-, an example of how effective a digitised database may be also in connection with studies of parts of words.

A promising way of application of our database is to trace all occurrences of a certain token on the basis of the grammatical tagging, that for a thematic study might be interesting, e.g., all the infinitives and participles of εἰμiv is a search that can be done in seconds.²⁶ A study of *hapax legomena* is another way to use such a

²³ See Leisegang's list of biblical references in his *Indices*, in Cohn, Wendland, and Reiter, *Philonis Alexandrini Opera*. Earp in F. H. Colson, *Philo. The Embassy to Gaius*, LCL (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1962) 189ff. Bibliographies also offer indices of biblical passages, see R. Radice and D. T. Runia, *Philo of Alexandria. An Annotated Bibliography 1936-86* (Leiden, 1988) 402ff. and D. T. Runia, *Philo of Alexandria. An Annotated Bibliography 1987-96* (Leiden: Brill, 1988) 368ff.

²⁴ As Runia, "How to Search Philo", *SPhilo* 2 (1990) 133ff., also demonstrates.

²⁵ H. Feld, "Der Hebräerbrief: Literarische Form, religionsgeschichtlicher Hintergrund, theologische Fragen", *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, Band II 25.4, ed. W. Haase (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1988) 3548ff.

²⁶ In our database there are 2346 instances of infinitives and present participles of εἰμί in Philo's writings, that may, for instance, be used to study the reception of the name of the Lord in Exodus LXX (Exod 3:14).

material, and a comparison with the TLG would easily demonstrate all *hapax legomena*, but would also require multiple time consuming searches for verbs since the TLG texts are not tagged.²⁷

The significance of finding thematic correspondence includes much more than attempts to find parallels for their own sake.²⁸ J. R. Davila lists 7 points of things that parallels in ancient literature can prove or attempt to prove: the meaning of a word, a translation from a particular language, direct literary influence, influence of ideas, membership in a defined social group, membership in a cross-cultural type (e.g. "king"), and participation in a shared phenomenological (cross-cultural) pattern that helps order the data being studied.

By "thematic correspondence" I refer mainly to what Davila calls "influence of ideas" demonstrating familiarity with "a certain work or body of literature, familiarity with a set of doctrines, a shared cultural pattern that helps order the data, a shared cultural background, a historical trajectory of an idea or a complex of ideas, and the life situation and/or the meaning of a difficult text."²⁹ Certainly, a complete word comparison of two text corpora facilitates such a procedure. In addition, complete comparisons of large texts as those employed here, may reveal a general correspondence of themes that may indicate a more direct literary relationship as well. An overview of a more complete thematic correspondence of Philo and the New Testament could be constructed with a combination of a vocabulary comparison also with the LXX, biblical references, and a systematic registration of words referring to possibly similar themes.

²⁷ What the comparison below does not demonstrate, however, is the possibility of tracing the use of cognates, i.e. the elements in compound words and alternative words for the same or similar phenomenon. This is a common rhetorical technique by any author and an important feature when searching for thematic similarities. A frequency list of the words that are *not* common in the New Testament and Philo, might also be possible to extract from our database and be potentially interesting for tracing dependence, but I have not included such a list here.

²⁸ To craft convincing parallels one has to make clear what claim is being made for the parallel and to make sure it is the appropriate claim for the evidence. Cf. the warning against the perils of parallels by S. Sandmel, "Parallelomania", *JBL* (1962) 1–13, and an article published on the Internet by J. R. Davila, "The Perils of Parallels" (Internet article cited with permission, 1990), and cf. M. Silva, *Biblical Words and Their Meaning. An Introduction to Lexical Semantics. Revised and Expanded Edition* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994). The danger of parallelism has naturally been recognised by scholars like Chadwick, "St. Paul and Philo of Alexandria" 306.

²⁹ J. R. Davila, "Perils of Parallels."

4. *Results of the Automatic Comparison*

A Presentation of General Results

With the necessary precautions for possible errors in the basic texts and in the long process of generating of the data as explained above, the main figures that I have collected in a comparison of the New Testament and Philo are:³⁰

1. Tokens

Number of all tokens in NT: 138,018 (24.02% of total)

Number of all tokens in Philo: 437,433 (75.98% of total)

Total number of occurrences of all tokens in Philo and NT: 574,451

2. Lemmas in each corpora

Number of lemmas in NT: 5426 (28.5% of total)

Number of lemmas in Philo: 13,607 (71.5% of total)

Total number of occurrences of all lemmas in Philo and NT: 19,033

3. Common lemmas

Number of common lemmas: 3114 (16.36% of total number of lemmas)

Percentage of lemmas in each corpus in relation to all common lemmas:
NT (57.40%), Philo (22.89%).

4. Tokens of common lemmas

Number of different tokens of each common lemma in NT: 125,086 (25.9% of total)

Number of different tokens of each common lemma in Philo: 357,872 (74.1% of total)

Total number of occurrences of all tokens of different common lemmas in both writings: 482,958

5. Number of common lemmas of nouns and adjectives

Both nouns and adjectives: Total 2404. Tokens of these lemmas: NT: 46,314 Philo: 116,886

Only nouns: Total 1299. Tokens of these lemmas: NT: 22,482 Philo: 65,457

Only adjectives: Total 1,105 Tokens of these lemmas: NT: 23,832 Philo: 51,429

On the background of the databases applied here, the relative frequency of each word may be constructed since there are about 3.17 times more occurrences of words or text-forms in Philo's writings

³⁰ The database was built up and a comparison was undertaken by using the program HyperCard on an Apple Macintosh. Although this program is no longer developed by Apple, it is still a useful and highly sophisticated program that functions perfectly for this kind of text-base.

than in the New Testament.³¹ Interesting in a search for thematic correspondence is particularly the number of common lemmas, as almost 60 percent of all lemmas in the New Testament also occur in Philo. Lists of other numbers and a list of the compared words may substantiate this correspondence.

A complete comparison frequency distribution list, with the 20 most recurrent words may further indicate similar styles and ideas in the two corpora.³²

List 2: The top of the frequency distribution list of common words in the NT and Philo

Nr/Word	Parse	TotalT	NT abs	Philo abs	NT rel	Min rel	Rel/abs
1 ὁ	R	78088	19863	58225	62966	58225	NT rel
2 καί	C	36531	9018	27513	28587	27513	NT rel
3 δέ	X	14301	2792	11509	8851	8851	
4 εἰμί	V	9418	2457	6961	7789	6961	NT rel
5 αὐτός	R	9715	5098	4617	16161	4617	NT abs
6 ὅς	R	7349	1407	5942	4460	4460	
7 ἐν	P	6752	2752	4000	8724	4000	NT rel
8 οὗτος	R	4922	1387	3535	4397	3535	NT rel
9 τίς τις	R	4437	1089	3348	3452	3348	NT rel
10 γάρ	X	6989	1041	5948	3300	3300	
11 πᾶς	A	4152	1243	2909	3940	2909	NT rel
12 θεός	N	3797	1317	2480	4175	2480	NT rel
13 μή	D	3484	1041	2443	3300	2443	NT rel
14 εἰς	P	4199	1767	2432	5601	2432	NT rel
15 πρός	P	3895	747	3148	2368	2368	
16 ἐπί	P	3216	890	2326	2821	2326	NT rel
17 ἐκ	P	3066	914	2152	2897	2152	NT rel
18 διὰ	P	3081	667	2414	2114	2114	
19 ἀλλά	C	3901	638	3263	2022	2022	
20 ἐγώ	R	4194	2582	1612	8185	1612	NT abs

³¹ I.e. round $(138018 \times 3.17) = 437433$.

³² "Parse": R = pronouns and articles, C = conjunction, X = particle, V = verb, P = preposition, A = adjective, D = adverb. "TotalT": total number of tokens of each lemma. "NT abs": absolute number of frequency of this word in the New Testament. "Philo abs": absolute number of frequency of this word in Philo. "NT rel": relative number of frequency of this word in the New Testament compared to Philo (relative factor is 3.17). "Min rel": the minimal relative value of the New Testament and Philo words. "Rel/abs": Relative and absolute frequency numbers: "NT rel": the relative number in the New Testament is higher than in Philo, "NT abs": the absolute number in the New Testament is higher than in Philo.

The list is arranged in accordance with the minimal relative value of frequency ("Min rel") of each word.

The words where the absolute frequency of words in the New Testament are higher than in Philo are in *italics*. In this way the list underlines the fact that the use of words like αὐτός and ἐγώ has a significant place in New Testament koiné Greek.³³ The list also demonstrates that several high frequency Greek words occur *relatively* more often in the New Testament than in Philo, a fact that should be related to the difference of genre and the nature of these words that are articles, particles and prepositions (only 6 words occur relatively more often in Philo, i.e. δέ, ὅς, γάρ, πρὸς, διὰ and ἀλλά). In a comparison of style, in lexical and grammatical research these words may turn out to be quite interesting, but this is not the aim of my comparison here.

One way to trace essential thematic correspondence is to find the most frequent parallel words and for that reason I have made the computer point out the minimal relative frequency (“Min rel”) of each common words. The words that occur frequently in both writings together are in this way emphasised. The only noun that appears in this list is, not surprisingly, θεός, a word that is also even relatively more recurrent in the New Testament than in Philo. In the above list, all words are included, but when thematic similarities are in question, high frequency words like articles, particles and prepositions are less interesting, while the status of nouns and verbs is essential. A short list of only the most recurrent nouns and verbs may further demonstrate interesting features:³⁴

List 3: The top of the frequency distribution list NT, Philo. Nouns and verbs only.

Nr.	Word	Parse	TotalT	NT abs	Philo abs	NT rel	Min rel	Rel/abs
1	εἰμί	V	9418	2457	6961	7789	6961	NT rel
2	λέγω	V	3861	2343	1518	7427	1518	NT abs
3	θεός	N	3797	1317	2480	4175	2480	NT rel
4	ψυχή	N	1917	103	1814	327	327	
5	ἔχω	V	1849	708	1141	2244	1141	NT rel

³³ In relation to αὐτός, this fact reflects that all cases of αὐτός are used for the personal pronoun of the third person in New Testament Greek, see F. Blass and A. Debrunner, *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1965) par. 277–282 where the grammar also discusses other perspectives of the use of personal pronouns. See also Morgenthaler, *Statistik der neutestamentlichen Wortschatzes*, 12–14.

³⁴ The list is arranged by the order of the most recurrent word in both writings (“TotalT”).

6	λόγος	N	1743	330	1413	1046	1046	
7	ἄνθρωπος	N	1722	550	1172	1744	1172	NT rel
8	φημί	V	1368	66	1302	209	209	
9	φύσις	N	1356	14	1342	44	44	
10	ποιέω	V	1198	568	630	1801	630	NT rel
11	σῶμα	N	1140	142	998	450	450	
12	γῆ	N	1099	250	849	792	792	
13	πατήρ	N	999	413	586	1309	586	NT rel
14	ἀρετή	N	960	5	955	16	16	
15	Ἰησοῦς	N	924	917	7	2907	7	NT abs
16	λαμβάνω	V	923	258	665	818	665	NT rel
17	ὁράω	V	907	475	432	1506	432	NT abs
18	δύναμαι	V	854	210	644	666	644	NT rel
19	ἡμέρα	N	829	389	440	1233	440	NT rel
20	ἔρχομαι	V	829	621	208	1969	208	NT abs
21	δύναμις	N	820	119	701	377	377	
22	κόσμος	N	820	186	634	590	590	
23	χράομαι	V	797	11	786	35	35	
24	δίδωμι	V	772	414	358	1312	358	NT abs
25	μέρος	N	741	42	699	133	133	
26	δέω	V	729	138	591	437	437	
27	νόμος	N	729	194	535	615	535	NT rel
28	άνήρ	N	727	216	511	685	511	NT rel
29	οὐρανός	N	705	273	432	865	432	NT rel
30	ὄνομα	N	704	230	474	729	474	NT rel
31	ἀκούω	V	696	428	268	1357	268	NT abs
32	υἱός	N	668	377	291	1195	291	NT abs
33	οἶδα	V	658	300	358	951	358	NT rel
34	γυνή	N	655	215	440	682	440	NT rel
35	πόλις	N	651	163	488	517	488	NT rel
36	τρόπος	N	638	13	625	41	41	
37	δοκέω	V	629	64	565	203	203	
38	ἔργον	N	627	169	458	536	458	NT rel
39	βίος	N	621	10	611	32	32	
40	καλέω	V	591	148	443	469	443	NT rel
41	ἀρχή	N	578	55	523	174	174	
42	αἴσθησις	N	568	1	567	3	3	
43	εὐρίσκω	V	557	175	382	555	382	NT rel
44	γένος	N	555	20	535	63	63	
45	ἄρχω	V	544	97	447	307	307	
46	πάθος	N	539	3	536	10	10	
47	πνεῦμα	N	530	379	151	1201	151	NT abs
48	ἀλήθεια	N	515	109	406	346	346	
49	μέλλω	V	505	109	396	346	346	
50	διάνοια	N	504	12	492	38	38	
51	νομίζω	V	501	15	486	48	48	
52	χάρις	N	500	155	345	491	345	NT rel

The most recurrent common nouns in the New Testament and Philo's writings are θεός, ψυχή, λόγος ἄνθρωπος, φύσις, σῶμα, γῆ, πατήρ, Ἰησοῦς, ἡμέρα, κόσμος, δύναμις, μέρος, νόμος, ἀνὴρ, οὐρανός, ὄνομα, υἱός, γυνή, πόλις, τρόπος, ἔργον, βίος, ἀρχή, αἴσθησις, γένος, πάθος, πνεῦμα, ἀλήθεια, διάνοια, and χάρις. Not listed above are the following nouns with their frequency number of occurrences of tokens (their number in the list is in parenthesis and the total number of tokens are indicated after the Greek word): (53) χρόνος 463, (54) βασιλεύς 459, (55) ἔθνος 449, (56) πρᾶγμα 448, (57) γενέσεις 443, (58) χεῖρ 430, (59), ἡδονή 427, (60) δόξα 422, (61) ζῶον 414, (62), and πίστις 403. This short list indicates that a complete printed list of common words sorted by frequency would in fact be a useful tool for scholars working with both the New Testament and Philo and that are interested in thematic correspondence. Again, I have emphasised some words: the words where the absolute frequency of words in the New Testament are higher than in Philo are in *italics*. In this category we find λέγω, Ἰησοῦς, ὁράω, ἔρχομαι, δίδωμι, ἀκούω, υἱός, and πνεῦμα among the 50 most recurrent common words. Some of these obviously reflect typical linguistic tendencies in this kind of Greek, while other are most likely to present typical Christian ideas and some may have been taken from a common pool used by both Philo and New Testament authors.

The list not only indicate thematic correspondence, however, it also demonstrates patterns of relationships of the two writings, and with one particular part of the New Testament especially.

A Comparison with the Letter to the Hebrews

The literature on the relationship between the New Testament and Philo is extensive, and the comparison with the Letter to the Hebrews is going back to seventeenth century with Grotius.³⁵ Not only this particular comparison, but also the entire comparison would benefit

³⁵ C. Spicq, "L'Épître aux Hébreux et Philon: Un cas d'Insertion de la littérature sacrée dans la Culture profane du 1er siècle (Hébr. V, 11–VI,20 et le 'De sacrificiis Abelis et Caini' de Philon)" *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, Band II 25.4, ed. W. Haase (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1987), 3607. Cf. *idem*, *L'Épître aux Hébreux* (Paris: J. Gabaldd, 1952).

a lot from a combination with a third variable, the LXX, also according to the procedure of Williamson.³⁶ Williamson attacked an almost accepted theory when he argued that there was probably little direct relationship between the authors of these text corpora.³⁷ The procedure that takes a *hapax legomenon* as its point of departure is necessary only if we want to establish arguments for or against a direct dependence between some of the New Testament writings and the Philo corpus, but not so much for tracing all possible corresponding themes, as I do.

A frequency distribution list of all common lemmas in each of the New Testament writings demonstrates the position of each New Testament writing in relation to Philo and a significant correspondence is in itself an argument for a close relationship. In this list I have also included a list of the distribution of nouns and verbs only (N/V).³⁸

³⁶ Williamson, *Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews*, (Leiden: Brill, 1970) 16–17.

³⁷ Williamson, *Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews*. F. F. Bruce, “‘To the Hebrews’: A Document of Roman Christianity?”, *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, Band II 25.4, ed. W. Haase (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1987) is sceptical of the importance of parallels between the two writings. S. G. Sowers, *The Hermeneutics of Philo and Hebrews. A Comparison of the Interpretation of the Old Testament in Philo Judaeus and the Epistle to Hebrews* (Zürich: EVZ Verlag, 1965) 66, maintains that Philo still offers “the best single body of *religionsgeschichtlich* material for the NT document”. Cf. also the comments in some recent commentaries on Hebrews, H. Feld, “Der Hebräerbrief,” R. M. Wilson, *Hebrews* (Grand Rapids: Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987) 22ff., D. Hagner, *Hebrews* (Peabody, 1990) 17–18, P. Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews. A Commentary on the Greek text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), C. Koester, *Hebrews. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 2001) 59–60.

³⁸ “Lem”= Total number of different lemmas in this writing, “CLem”=number of common lemmas with Philo, “%Lem”=percentage of common lemmas with Philo in relation to total number of lemmas in this writing, “%LemA”=percentage of common lemmas in this writing in relation to all different lemmas in the entire New Testament (total=5426), “Tok”=number of tokens of common lemmas, “N/V”=number of tokens of common lemmas of verbs and nouns only, “TotalT”=total number of tokens in the writing, “%totalNT”=rounded percentage of the total number of tokens in the New Testament (total=138,018).

List 4: The complete distribution list of Philo words in relation to every single NT writing

Nr	Writing	Lem	CLem	%Lem	%LemA	Tok	N/V	TotalT	%totalNT
1	Mt	1681	1116	66,39	20,56	14469	6236	18346	13,29
2	Mk	1335	916	68,61	16,88	8866	3785	11304	8,19
3	Lk	2038	1324	64,97	24,40	15355	6638	19482	14,12
4	Jn	1096	752	68,61	13,86	12425	5339	15635	11,33
5	Acts	2012	1399	69,53	25,78	12912	6292	18450	13,37
6	Rom	1056	787	74,52	14,50	5176	2318	7111	5,15
7	1 Cor	951	732	76,97	13,49	5083	2129	6829	4,95
8	2 Cor	785	597	76,05	11,00	3280	1291	4478	3,24
9	Gal	516	396	76,74	7,29	1644	724	2229	1,62
10	Eph	524	410	78,24	7,55	1639	756	2422	1,75
11	Phil	440	341	77,50	6,28	1155	464	1628	1,18
12	Col	427	323	75,64	5,95	1065	464	1582	1,15
13	1 Thess	361	289	80,05	5,33	1062	426	1481	1,07
14	2 Thess	249	202	81,12	3,72	614	239	823	0,60
15	1 Tim	536	408	76,12	7,52	1163	564	1591	1,15
16	2 Tim	450	328	72,89	6,05	865	386	1238	0,90
17	Titus	297	242	81,48	4,46	505	224	659	0,48
18	Philem	139	110	79,14	2,03	246	79	335	0,24
19	Heb	1023	829	81,04	15,27	3578	1787	4953	3,59
20	Jas	553	456	82,46	8,40	1275	625	1742	1,26
21	1 Pet	541	415	76,71	7,65	1224	566	1684	1,22
22	2 Pet	397	321	80,85	5,92	795	395	1099	0,80
23	1 Jn	231	206	89,18	3,80	1567	744	2141	1,55
24	2 Jn	94	85	90,43	1,56	185	87	245	0,78
25	3 Jn	107	89	83,18	1,64	161	69	219	1,59
26	Jude	226	185	81,86	3,41	335	165	461	0,33
27	Rev	913	729	79,85	13,44	6395	3522	9851	7,14

According to the database there are 4953 tokens and 1023 lemmas in the Letter to the Hebrews.³⁹ Some of the figures above are not very interesting. The percentage of common lemmas in relation to all lemmas in each writing (“%Lem”) may also be less interesting due to the great number of ordinary words in any language. The percentage of common lemmas in relation to all different lemmas in the entire New Testament (“%LemA”) may, on the other hand, be more significant and interesting for the alleged relationship between each of the New Testament writings and Philo.

The most significant figure is without doubt the findings in con-

³⁹ R. Williamson, *Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews* 16, reckons 1054 words, while Morgenthaler *Statistik der neutestamentlichen Wortschatzes* 164, operates with 1038 words.

nection with the Letter to Hebrews, which is in one way not surprising, since it confirms the general impression and the results of the scholarly discussion of the last 150 years. However, the statistic also adds to the discussion a quantitative argument.

My procedure is, as stated, quite opposite to the procedure of Williamson and it presents a slightly different picture of relationship than Williamson's. Williamson concentrated on a study of words found only in Hebrews in the New Testament (NT hapax legomena in Hebrews).⁴⁰ Computer technology now allows us, however, to study and compare all the words in Philo and the New Testament and we see that in comparison with the other New Testament writings Hebrews scores high when it comes to the percentage of *common* lemmas in relation to the total number of lemmas in this writing ("%Lem"=) as well as in the percentage of common lemmas in relation to all different lemmas in the New Testament (="%LemA"). Of all registered nouns and verbs it is important to notice that in the Letter to the Hebrews, 81.04 percent of them are also recognisable in the writings of Philo and in relation to all lemmas in the entire New Testament they represent 15.27 percent.

As a comparison, the Gospel of John, another writing to which Philo is often compared, has 13.86 percent of common lemmas in relation to all different lemmas in the New Testament with more than three times as many tokens all together (15,635 words in John compared to 4953 in Hebrews). Statistically speaking, the frequency of common words with the Philo should also be higher in John than in Hebrews since there are more lemmas in John than in Hebrews. The shorter writings of the New Testament (e.g. 1 John, 2 John, 3 John and Jude) also have a high score in comparison with the larger ones, but this finding is statistically less significant since these writings are very short. Nevertheless, this certainly encourages us to study the relationship further and in light of the above distribution list it is perhaps not yet time to close the discussion of the relationship between Philo and the Hebrews.⁴¹ The over-representation of Philo

⁴⁰ There are 157 NT *hapax legomena* words, 14 of these do not occur in the LXX, cf. Williamson, *Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews*, 11ff.

⁴¹ Spicq, "L'Épître aux Hébreux et Philon", 3609, defends himself rightly by arguing that Philo and Hebrew not only demonstrate similar ideas and culture, but also the same intellectual mentality and preconceptions ("non seulement le même tour d'esprit, et la même culture, mais une même mentalité intellectuelle et une identique 'table de préjugés'").

words in Hebrews compared to other New Testament writing more than indicate a more specific connection and even direct relationship of these writings or their background milieu.

For a thematic overview, the comparison of only nouns would reduce the “errors” of comparison that are prevalent in a comparison that also includes the high frequency words. A vocabulary comparison between Philo and the Letter to the Hebrews further demonstrates common words that may again indicate common themes. This time only nouns are compared:⁴²

List 5: The top of the frequency list of common words in Hebrews and Philo

Nr.	Word	Heb	NT abs	Philo abs	NT rel	Min rel	Rel/abs
1	θεός	58	1317	2480	4175	2480	NT rel
2	πίστις	32	243	160	770	160	NT abs
3	ἁμαρτία	25	173	29	548	29	NT abs
4	υἱός	24	377	291	1195	291	NT abs
5	αἷμα	21	97	122	307	122	NT rel
6	ἡμέρα	18	389	440	1233	440	NT rel
7	ἀρχιερέυς	17	122	68	387	68	NT abs
8	διαθήκη	17	33	23	105	23	NT abs
9	αἰών	15	122	76	387	76	NT abs
10	θυσία	15	28	175	89	89	
11	ἐπαγγελία	14	52	1	165	1	NT abs
12	ιερέυς	14	31	168	98	98	
13	νόμος	14	194	535	615	535	NT rel
14	ἄγγελος	13	175	77	555	77	NT abs
15	λαός	13	142	90	450	90	NT abs
16	λόγος	12	330	1413	1046	1046	
17	πνεῦμα	12	379	151	1201	151	NT abs
18	γῆ	11	250	849	792	792	
19	Ἰησοῦς	11	917	7	2907	7	NT abs
20	καρδία	11	156	39	495	39	NT abs
21	οἶκος	11	114	168	361	168	NT rel
22	Ἀβραάμ	10	73	161	231	161	NT rel
23	ἄνθρωπος	10	550	1172	1744	1172	NT rel
24	θάνατος	10	120	243	380	243	NT rel
25	οὐρανός	10	273	432	865	432	NT rel

⁴² “Heb” means the total number of the common nouns in Hebrews (also sorting order in this list). On the other abbreviation of this list, see above in connection to list 2. I have also included the figures of these words in relation to the entire New Testament (“NT rel, Min rel, Rel/abs”).

26	σκηνή	10	20	76	63	63	
27	ἔργον	9	169	458	536	458	NT rel
28	πατήρ	9	413	586	1309	586	NT rel
29	κατάπανσις	8	9	1	29	1	NT abs
30	χάρις	8	155	345	491	345	NT rel
31	βασιλεύς	7	115	344	365	344	NT rel
32	δόξα	7	166	256	526	256	NT rel
33	σωτηρία	7	46	85	146	85	NT rel
34	ἀρχή	6	55	523	174	174	
35	δικαιοσύνη	6	92	123	292	123	NT rel
36	δύναμις	6	119	701	377	377	
37	σάβξ	6	147	98	466	98	NT abs
38	τάξις	6	9	239	29	29	
39	ψυχή	6	103	1814	327	327	
40	δῶρον	5	19	51	60	51	NT rel
41	ἐλπὶς	5	53	177	168	168	
42	θέλημα	5	62	1	197	1	NT abs
43	κόσμος	5	186	634	590	590	
44	προσφορά	5	9	1	29	1	NT abs
45	πῦρ	5	71	237	225	225	
46	συνείδησις	5	30	4	95	4	NT abs
47	σῶμα	5	142	998	450	450	
48	φωνή	5	139	218	441	218	NT rel
49	χείρ	5	177	253	561	253	NT rel
50	χρεία	4	49	88	155	88	NT rel

To find words whose occurrences in Hebrews are absolutely greater than in Philo, is not to be expected since the Philo text is so much larger than Hebrews. There are, nevertheless, some words in a list of this kind: ἐπαγγελία (“promise”), Ἰησοῦς, κατάπανσις (“rest”), συνείδησις (“conscience”), προσφορά (“offerings”), θέλημα (“will”), while διαθήκη (“covenant”) comes close to its frequency number in Philo. None of these are NT hapax legomena in Hebrews, but nevertheless indicate important common themes in Hebrews and Philo and in some cases also a unique correspondence compared to the other writings of the New Testament.

Only a further detailed study of the most frequent common words in context can substantiate a more direct link of ideas from these common words in Philo and Hebrews, but the distribution list above (list 4) with a comparison of all New Testament writings strongly supports a more direct relationship between Philo and Hebrews than between Philo and any other New Testament writing. Together with a word frequency list (list 5) they lay a firm ground for further studies in this direction.

5. *Conclusion*

This comparison between the Greek words in the New Testament and the writings of Philo demonstrates some common and some different language patterns of the two corpora. More than providing analytical reflection of detailed words, I have pointed out several possibly fruitful ways of applying the database of the Philo Concordance Project for biblical studies. The correspondence of words are particularly significant in relation to the Letter to the Hebrews, a fact that should encourage new studies on the relationship between these two writings on the basis of *common* words. The comparison provides vocabulary statistics that may suggest where a more sophisticated approach might be useful. A comparison of common words in the Septuagint would add to our general knowledge of the use of the Greek language in these Jewish and Jewish-Christian writings as well as further indicate possible common traditions in Philo of Alexandria and the New Testament that have not come from the alleged common tradition known to us by the way of the Septuagint.

A SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY OF
PEDER JOHAN BORGEN 1987–2001

Compiled by Torrey Seland

The present bibliography continues the one published earlier in *Context. Festschrift til Peder Borgen/Essays in Honour of Peder Borgen*, ed. P. W. Böckman and R. Kristiansen (Relieff 24; Trondheim: Tapir Forlag, 1987) 225–233. Original versions of reprints are noted. The bibliography does not refer to articles in newspapers, magazines and book-reviews, but comprises books, edited books and scholarly articles.

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